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OF
JOHN M. BAXTER

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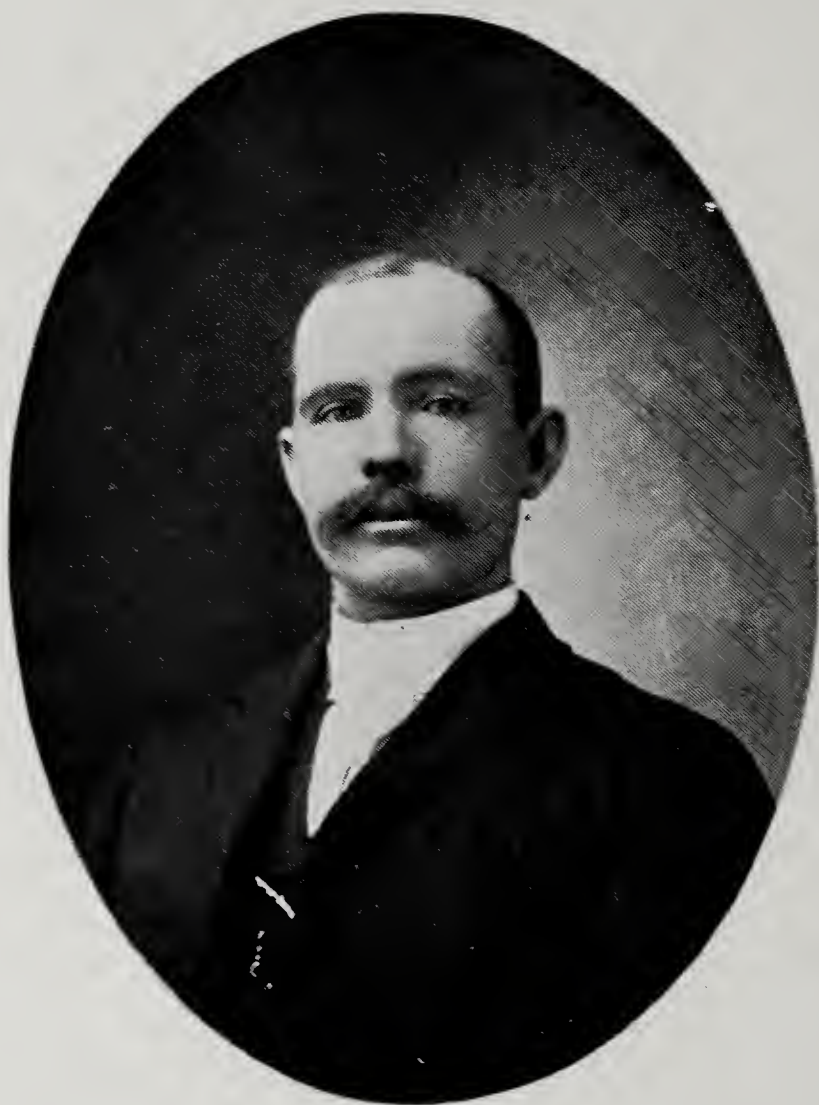
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JOHN M. BAXTER

LIFE OF JOHN M. BAXTER

Being a brief account
of his experiences as
a Pioneer, Missionary,
Bishop and Stake
President. . . .

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

Salt Lake City, Utah
1932

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PREFACE

This little book, "Life of John M. Baxter," is intended to bring happy memories to the minds of my friends and associates in life, after I shall have gone the way of all flesh. In this connection I am remembering especially my associates in the Randolph and Woodruff wards, in Rich County, Utah, and in the Woodruff and Lyman stakes of Zion. I have in mind parents and grandparents of the present generation, with whom I associated so pleasantly and yet, at times, under very adverse circumstances. I have in my book endeavored to record such incidents in their lives that may not be recorded elsewhere. I have also aimed to record such experiences in my own life which might tend to promote faith in the hearts of some of the readers regarding the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or true Christianity, and the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. With these objects in mind, I dedicate this work to the people of the stakes and wards which I have mentioned and in sweet remembrance of the many true and faithful friends which I have gained during my sojourn in mortality.

I am very much indebted to Elder Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, for his able assistance in revising and preparing this work for the press.

John M. Baxter.

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Life of John M. Baxter

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND CHILD LIFE

My father, Robert Wright Baxter, was the son of John Baxter, who was born in 1800, and Margaret Wright, who was born January 11, 1798. Both of these grandparents were born at Donahadee, County Down, Ulster, Ireland.

My father was also born at Donahadee, County Down, Ireland, February 2, 1819. He emigrated to Utah in the year 1855, arriving in Salt Lake City, Utah, September 25, 1855, in Richard Ballantine's company. He married Isabel Gray, January 31, 1845, the daughter of John Gray and Elizabeth McCutcheon, both of whom died at Kilmarnock, Scotland. Isabel Gray also died at Kilmarnock, Scotland, January 4, 1847. He then married Jane Love in 1848, at Greenock, Scotland. She bore him eight children.

My mother, Jane McKinnon, was born in Argyle-shire, Scotland, March 20, 1823. In her early life she worked in the bleaching fields at Greenock. She was married to Archibald McPhail, a widower and shoemaker by trade, in the year 1854. They sailed for America on the ship "Thornton" on Thursday, May 1, 1856, landed in New York June 14th, and arrived at Iowa City, Iowa, June 26, 1856. They left Florence, Nebraska, Aug. 25th, in Edward Martin's handcart Company. This

company was caught in snow storms on Greasewood Creek, near the Sweetwater. Pres. Brigham Young, upon learning of the dreadful condition of this company, sent teams at once from Salt Lake City, loaded with provisions to provide for their relief. Before the teams could reach them, however, the people suffered extremely from cold and hunger. It was reported that one-half of Martin's Company died on their way, but the historian puts the deaths between 135 and 150. These people, some time be-



MY FATHER AND MOTHER

fore reaching Sweetwater, were put on rations of two ounces of flour each per day, and had to pull their hand-carts all day through snow and over hills on this ration. Many of them had their hands and feet frozen. Archibald McPhail was so worn out and sick, when the relief teams met them, that he could not walk. He was taken into

one of the wagons, while my mother walked behind. Mother said that one morning she saw nine men put in one grave with only sheets wrapped around them.

When the company arrived at the crossing of Bear River, later known as Myers' Crossing, Archibald McPhail died and was buried on the hill east of the river. Mother related a very touching incident connected with his death. She was sitting in the wagon in the night with her sick husband's head on her knee, waiting for him to die. Having a small piece of tallow candle she prayed that the candle might last until her husband should pass away. Her prayer was answered, for the light of the candle and the life of her husband went out at the same moment. Archibald McPhail was born in Scotland in the year 1817, and at the time of his death he was just thirty-nine years of age. When the company arrived in Salt Lake City, three feet of snow covered Main Street. Mother had with her the three-year-old daughter Jane, and a fifteen-year-old daughter of McPhail's by his former marriage named Henriette, who was taken by the family of Israel Ivins (the father of President Anthony W. Ivins), to live with them. Mother, being left with my sister Jane and herself to care for, was taken in by some friends and cared for until she could find employment.

My father was well acquainted with Archibald McPhail and mother in Scotland. He had come to Utah the year before them, and married my mother in Salt Lake City in the year following her arrival in Utah, as his plural wife. Father was living at the Warm Springs in the 19th Ward, having charge of the Bath House, then owned by Pres. Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and others. At this place I was born June 3, 1859. As

father's first wife and mother could not agree, mother withdrew from the family. Shortly after this, father, with his family, moved to Wellsville, in Cache County, Utah, but mother remained in Salt Lake City, being left upon her own resources, with my sister Jane and myself, an infant, to care for. She rented a house and went out scrubbing and took in washing for a living, leaving me when she went out, with my sister Jane, who was seven years older than I. Mother had a younger brother, Archibald McKinnon, who came to Utah in 1855, the year before she arrived. He had gone south in 1858, in the time of "the move" and lived with some friends at Spanish Fork. Later he moved to Salt Lake City, finding employment with the firm of Curtis and Jenkins, harness and saddle-makers. This brother was very kind to mother and me, looking after our interests until he married.

My first recollection in mortality was when we lived at the Tuft house, on State Street in the Eighth Ward. Mrs. Tuft was the proprietor, and mother helped her with the house work. I think that the Tuft house was one of the first hotels in Salt Lake City. The stage coach stopped there, and, I think, changed horses there also. After this, we moved to Mother Taylor's Row, a row of houses owned by the mother of the late Pres. John Taylor, situated near the present site of the Interurban Depot. The old lady was very kind to mother.

While we were living there I can just remember a practical joke played upon James Hardie, one of Salt Lake's first and most prominent actors. He occupied an upper room in Mother Taylor's Row. The stairs led up to the room from the outside. He had been rehearsing

for a play, and being up late at night, slept in the daytime. The day before the evening that the play was to be presented a number of young fellows, "Cub" Johnson, "Gus" Sprouse, Jerry Richardson, "Bud" Olphin, and perhaps others, set up a long pole with one end in the ground and the other lashed to the landing of the steps. They then tied the door of Hardie's room fast to the pole. Consequently there was no performance at the Salt Lake Theatre that night.

Some time later mother rented two rooms from Jacob Peart in the Fourteenth ward on the corner of Third South and West Temple streets.

My Uncle Archibald McKinnon, then a married man, lived in a little house of his own on the corner of Main and East Sixth South streets. He had also gone into the harness business for himself and had a shop on East Main Street (now State Street) between Second and Third South streets.

I started to go to school when I was seven years old, in the Seventh Ward School House. Franklin S. Richards was my teacher, a very bright and promising young man, who later became one of the most prominent attorneys in the State of Utah. On a Saturday, while I was not at school, I ran errands for my uncle, who often sent me into the Nineteenth Ward to Pugsley's tannery for a side of leather, which I would carry down to the shop, about a mile distant. I took plenty of time, however, resting at every corner, and often engaging in a game of marbles with the boys that I met on the way. My uncle was a member of the School of the Prophets, who held meetings in the old Tabernacle Saturday after-

noons. I used to stay in the shop while he attended these meetings.

On one of these occasions I was taught my first lesson in honesty which has remained with me all through life. While Uncle was away, I put some copper rivets and burrs in my pocket and took them home with me. That evening, when I undressed, mother discovered the rivets and burrs in my pocket and asked me if Uncle had given them to me. I told her he had not, but that I had taken them. She then made me dress and sent me down to Uncle's house, which was five blocks away, though it was quite dark. She requested that I return them and ask his forgiveness and promise him that I would never do such a thing again. I did as I was told, but I do not think I have ever had a greater trial than that. It proved a good lesson, and I do not think that I have ever stolen anything since.

Mother was very strict in the observance of the Sabbath and attended the services in the Tabernacle every Sunday, taking me with her. She taught me to pray from my earliest remembrance, and when one of the general authorities of the Church arose to speak, she would tell me his name and inform me that he was one of the men I prayed for every night. In this way I became acquainted with the Presidency of the Church and the Twelve Apostles at a very early age, and was so impressed with them through my mother's teachings that all through my life I have had a reverence for the general authorities of the Church.

When seven years old I began to attend Sunday School in the Fourteenth Ward. Thomas Taylor was the superintendent. My first duty was to pass the

drinking water to the children, that being the custom in those days, and I have attended Sunday School quite regularly ever since.

After leaving the Seventh Ward day school I was sent to a school in the Fourteenth Ward, taught by Mrs. Ott. Brother and Sister Ott both taught school in the Fourteenth Ward. After attending Mrs. Ott's school a short time I was sent to school at the home of Mrs. Eleanor Pratt, a wife of the late Apostle Parley P. Pratt, who taught a private school in her residence. Mother paid for my tuition by cleaning the school room every Friday evening. While attending Mrs. Pratt's school, I was quite gifted in reciting poems and was sent from her school to other schools Friday afternoons to recite. After attending Mrs. Pratt's school for three years, mother made arrangements for me to enter the University of Deseret (now the University of Utah), which was located on the corner, where the Deseret News Building now stands. The terms of tuition were the same as at Mrs. Pratt's—mother was to clean the school room. In the year 1869 my sister Jane was married to George A. Peart, and they lived with us until they built a house of their own, about one year later.

CHAPTER II

MOVED TO BEAR RIVER VALLEY

In the year 1871, in the beginning of May, my uncle, Archibald McKinnon, and brother-in-law, George A. Peart, moved to Bear River Valley, taking mother and myself with them. We located at Randolph, Utah. Uncle had a team of old grey horses that were so balky that we had to leave the wagon on a down hill slope when we unhitched them, so that we could push the wagon onto them to get them started. He also had two old cows named Polly and Peggy. Brother Peart had an old team he called Jack and Charlie that he had received in part payment for his house which he sold to his brother, Jacob. He also had two or three cows. We were eight days making the journey from Salt Lake City to Randolph, a distance of about one hundred and fifteen miles. I was then twelve years of age. There were only a few houses in Randolph when we arrived, but some families were living in tents. We also lived in a tent the first summer that we were there. On our arrival at Randolph my sister, deciding to go into the chicken business, secured a number of setting hens and hatched out quite a lot of chicks; but she did not realize that they had to be fed, and, not having any feed for them, they nearly all died. One Sunday, in the fall, when we all went to meeting, my sister put to rise a large pan of dough and left it on the table in the tent. On returning from meeting, we found the chickens had gotten into the tent; some of them were sticking fast in the dough and others run-

ning around the place with their feet covered, and the other chicks chasing them for the dough that clung to their feet. This was the only real feed the chicks had had since they were hatched. Another time, while we were away from home, a very heavy wind came up and blew the tent down, scattering its contents over the lot.

Before leaving Salt Lake City, Uncle and Brother Peart secured a lot of young fruit trees, apples, plums, pears, etc., and upon arriving at Randolph they set them out along the bank of the creek. But as the creek overflowed in the winter and the ice was over a foot thick around the trees, this proved the end of the fruit orchard.

During the summer of 1871 we went into the canyons and got material to build a log house. In the spring of 1872 I assisted Uncle in breaking up new land, he having traded his horses for oxen. He held the plow, while I drove the oxen. The sagebrush had to be gathered by hand, which was a very slow and tedious process, hence it required a great deal of time and labor to put the land under cultivation. Uncle, who had been a harness-maker in Salt Lake City, and George A. Peart, a carpenter, had no experience in farming; therefore they had a very hard time to establish themselves as farmers in a new country. The climate being very cold, their crops froze year after year, so that they were compelled to leave home to find employment for the support of their families. They went to St. Charles, Idaho, and dug potatoes on shares, and bought wheat at Laketown and had it ground for flour. Uncle and I made a trip to Coalville, Utah, for a load of flour, each. He had his old oxen and I had Jack and Charlie, the old horses. It took us two weeks to make the round trip, a distance of about seventy-three miles.

In August, 1884, Randolph was visited by Pres. John Taylor and others of the general authorities of the Church, who held a meeting with the settlers. After the regular services were closed, the President called back the people who were leaving, and, in addressing them, briefly prophesied that if the Saints would live their religion and trust in the Lord, the climate would be modified in their behalf so that their crops would not be destroyed by frost—a prophecy which has been literally fulfilled, for ever since the people of Randolph have raised their own breadstuffs.

An incident occurred about this time which strengthened my faith very much in the ordinance of healing. Two of my Uncle's boys, about six and eight years of age, were playing near the house on a pile of clay that was left over from plastering the building. The clay was frozen, and the boys were chopping it with an ax. Just as one of the boys raised the ax to strike it into the clay, the other boy stooped and accidentally put his head under the ax. The ax punctured the skull and exposed the brain. The mother of the boy ran out when the accident happened and carried the boy into the house and laid him on the bed. Although the boy did not appear to have any life in his body, the mother knelt down by the bed and prayed earnestly and with faith for his recovery. At once he began to show signs of life. The father, not being at home, in the meantime was sent for, and Bishop Randolph H. Stuart administered to the child, who then fell asleep and had no further trouble, only to await the time for the wound to heal. There was no doctor at Randolph in those days, and the people depended largely upon the power of the Priesthood, and

the nursing of the kind sisters to heal the sick. It was a rare thing to have a death at that time in this settlement.

When we first went to Randolph, the Indians would trail through the valley every spring and fall, going from the Wind River Country in the spring to the Salmon River in Idaho to summer, and back to Wind River in the fall to winter there. I was very fond of fishing and swimming with the Indian boys, and my wife, when a girl, did a great deal of sewing for the papooses. While she sat on a chair sewing some article of clothing for the papooses, the Indian squaws would sit in a circle all around her, with their children all squatting on the ground, patiently waiting for the piece of clothing. This continued with these Indians for quite a number of years. In return the Indians often brought her presents of dried service berries and other fruits, and also fish. One squaw brought her a pair of beautiful shoes, which were just the fit. As to where the squaw got the shoes we don't know, nor did we ask any questions.

On one occasion I had quite an experience with the Indians. At this time there was no wagon road down Laketown Canyon, only an Indian trail. I was sent with a message to Laketown, riding a very spirited little pony. On returning, I met with a band of Indians in the canyon, numbering perhaps five hundred Indians, with their dogs and outfit. Their tent poles were trailing on each side of their horses, while a squaw and her camp outfit occupied the back of the horse. I met them where the trail went through a narrow defile between two ledges of rock, so that I could not pass. I drew my pony as far as I could against the side of the ledge, and waited there until the whole train went by. The Indians had

a great deal of fun while passing at my expense. The bucks would shake their blanket at my pony which was crazed with fright, and the squaws would laugh till their sides would shake at my predicament. It was no laughing matter for me, however, as my pony would lunge and rear with fright, and it was all I could do to control him and stay in the saddle. After the Indians had all passed, the perspiration was dripping from both my pony and myself. We were both glad that we had survived this thrilling experience and continued on our homeward trail.

CHAPTER III

PIONEERING A NEW COUNTRY

After the people of Randolph had put the land on Little Creek under cultivation, they found that they did not have sufficient water from said creek to irrigate it, so they decided to construct a canal from Big Creek across the foothills to their lands. I assisted in the survey of this canal, carrying the stakes and driving them. The digging of the canal was done with a plow and shovels. I also assisted in shoveling the dirt out of the canal which was about three miles long, six feet wide and eighteen inches deep. This was the first canal built in the Bear River Valley, to my knowledge.

The winter of 1875 and 1876 was a very severe one; the snow fell early in November to a depth of three feet and laid on the ground until May. Hay being very scarce, it was necessary for the Randolph people to take their cattle over the river, on to a range of high and rugged mountains, where the snow had blown off the ridges and left feed for the cattle by moving them from one ridge to another and tramping trails through the hollows. In this labor I assisted all that winter. We walked from Randolph to where the cattle were every other day, a distance of about four miles; a great many cattle were lost that winter. The firm of Crawford and Thompson, which had brought large herds of cattle from Texas, lost very heavily. They dragged hundreds of head on the ice of the river so that they would float down when the river broke up.

Bishop Randolph H. Stuart had in his charge a large herd of cattle from Texas belonging to Mrs. Blackburn; many of them died also.

One amusing little incident happened one day while we were moving the cattle. As we were climbing up the hill we saw some cattle in a snow drift. Brother Peart said, "I think animals have a sense of gratitude." Uncle McKinnon suggested, "No, animals have no sense of gratitude; they cannot reason." At this an argument ensued that became quite heated. Finally, we came to a drift in which a Texas cow was fast and unable to get out. Brother Peart said, "Now we will test this matter," and he suggested that we help the cow out, so that she might show her gratitude. Brother McKinnon and I declined to take any part in the matter, but Brother Peart proceeded to help the poor cow. He tramped the snow in front of her until there was a good trail, and then got behind her to help her up. He got her upon her hind legs and then took hold of her horns to assist in raising her front parts. The cow, making a struggle, got on her feet. Brother Peart then ran ahead of her, but as soon as she got on dry land, she took after her rescuer, who ran like the wind with his coat tails flying. She finally caught him and kept bunting him at every jump until he came to another snow drift, when, luckily, the crust held him, but the cow broke through and remained there. Brother Peart turned and said, "You may lie there and die for all I care." This incident ended the controversy.

The process of moving the cattle was continued until the spring opened up in May. The weather then turned so warm that the water from melting snow came down in a flood, and the river overflowing its banks caused the

water to extend far out in the valley, so that the cattle could not cross at the usual point of crossing, but had to be taken up the river and across a bridge at Almy, Wyoming, a distance of twenty miles, causing us to travel fifty miles with the cattle to really go four miles.

A company of seven men in charge of Bishop Randolph H. Stuart was assigned the task of getting the cattle home, I being one of them, though only seventeen years old. We procured a boat and took the provisions, saddles, bedding, etc., over the river in the boat, and then undertook to swim the horses, but when they got into the middle of the stream they began to swim around in a circle, becoming very much excited, and tried to climb on top of each other until it seemed that they would be drowned. Two of the men rowed out in the boat endeavoring to break their milling, but as the horses tried to climb into the boat, thus endangering the lives of the men in the boat, they came back to the shore.

Bishop Stuart had a Texas horse that was a wonderful swimmer, and one of the men mounted him and went out near the horses. When the horses saw the man on horseback coming toward them, they broke the circle and made for him. The rider then turned his horse and made for the shore again. The horses followed, landing upon the same side they started from. It was then near evening, and the day had been spent in vain as far as crossing the horses was concerned. We all returned to Randolph, remaining there over night.

Early in the morning we started to renew our task. This time two men took the boat, one of them rowing while the other, with a long rope, led Bishop Stuart's horse into the stream. Those on the bank then rushed

the other horses into the stream after them. This proved successful; the animals followed the Stuart horse, and all landed safely on the opposite shore.

We gathered the cattle, which took us two days, then started for the bridge at Almy. The first night found us as far as the point of the mountain east of Woodruff. In the evening it began to rain and the down-pour continued all night. As we pitched our camp in a bunch of willows on the river, the men were all drenched with the rain, which made them very cold and uncomfortable. At that time a man by the name of Thompson kept a saloon at Almy, and it was suggested that someone be sent up there for whiskey. Hence, two of the men went for it and returned about midnight with several bottles, of which all the men drank quite freely. But when the whiskey was passed to me, I refused to drink it. The persuasive powers of the whole company was used to get me to drink, but without avail. Then two of the men held me while a third tried to pour the whiskey down my throat. At this juncture the Bishop interfered and said, "Let him alone, boys, you know he is his mammy's boy and he dare not drink." He said this in a very slurring way, which cut me to the heart. I had always sustained the Bishop, and had been obedient to him in every way, and for him, in this most severe trial and temptation, to ridicule me and say I was my mammy's boy, and must not drink, seemed more than I could stand. I made up my mind that I would never support Bishop Stuart again. Soon, however, I repented of that resolution, but have never forgotten the trial of that night.

While passing through Almy, shortly after daylight, two coal miners came out of their cabin wearing red

undershirts. The cattle charged them, and we had great difficulty in saving the lives of the miners and getting them back safely into their cabin. We arrived in Randolph with the cattle without any further trouble.

CHAPTER IV

NEARLY LOST MY LIFE BY FREEZING

Soon after the settlement of Randolph, the chief occupation of the men and boys was hauling timber out of the canyons, principally house logs and fence poles, which were exchanged to the ranchers in the valley for horses and cattle, and were used in a general way as a medium of exchange. I often took five poles to the dance hall to pay for my dance ticket, which was fifty cents, and the current price of poles was ten cents each. About this time George A. Peart, with whom I was living, bought a very fine pair of mares from a man by the name of Taylor, who was making a ranch on Saleratus Creek, about fifteen miles south of Randolph. The mares were to be paid for with poles delivered at Taylor's Ranch. Brother Peart had a little yoke of oxen at that time, that I was breaking. He made me this proposition, that if I would get the poles out of the canyon, and deliver them at the Taylor Ranch, he would give me the steers; this I agreed to do. I got all the poles out of the canyon in the summer and took them to the Taylor Ranch in the winter. While performing this work I nearly lost my life.

In company with James Smith, my future brother-in-law, (who had also traded poles to Taylor for horses), we started out with a load of poles each and arrived at our destination all right; but when we started to return, we encountered a very severe blizzard. It was very cold indeed and the wind blew so hard that we could hardly see our oxen before us. In the storm my oxen left the road and wandered out on the

saleratus bottoms. The storm, coming from the north, was so fierce that they would not face it. After wandering around for a long time through the deep snow, I became worn out and laid down on my hind bob sleigh. I do not know how long I remained in this condition, but I was found and aroused by a man who was crossing the valley on horseback. He woke me up and rode ahead directing me until I got on the road. In the meantime the storm had let up a little, and we could see the mountains opposite Randolph. He told me that in case I got off the road again to keep straight for those mountains and then left me. On nearing Woodruff, I laid down on my sleigh again and went to sleep. The next thing I knew was some one pulling me off my sleigh; and when I awoke I found that my oxen had stopped in the road in front of a house in Woodruff. When the people came out and found me asleep on the sleigh, nearly frozen, they took me into the house, unhitched my oxen, watered and fed them some hay. The lady of the house warmed me up, gave me food and something warm to drink, and made me lie on the bed. She insisted that I should stay until morning; but knowing that the folks at home would be worrying about me I determined to go on, and so the men hitched up my team, the lady gave me an overcoat and a heavy quilt and thus equipped I went on to Randolph, arriving there at 3 o'clock in the morning. I took to my bed then, and it was two weeks before I fully recovered. I never learned the names of those good people at Woodruff, and do not know now who they were, but I do know that they saved my life.

CHAPTER V

WORK ON TEMPLE ROAD

In the year 1876 I was called, together with a number of other boys and men, to work on the Logan Canyon Road, to get lumber out for the Logan Temple which was then in course of construction. The company was organized with a captain, chaplain, etc. George Simpson, a very pious old gentleman, was chosen as our chaplain. He had selected a place a short distance from the camp fire for morning and evening prayer. He did all the praying himself and was very lengthy in his devotion. The weather being extremely cold, the boys would often slip away to the camp fire to get warmed and return before the prayer was ended. I worked on this road for about two months, then returned to my home.

After returning from the Temple Road, a request was made upon the Randolph Ward to furnish a yoke of oxen to work at the Temple saw mill. Bishop Stuart looked all over town to get them, but without success. He then came to me and requested that I let mine go. Having become very much attached to my little steers I told him that I didn't like to part with them. They had been very faithful in serving me, and I had them well trained and desired to keep them. When I was camped in the timber, these steers would come and lie down on each side of my bed, and chew their cud all night which was great company to me. I hauled lumber from the sawmill with them to build the Booth and Crocker barn, which is now owned by the Reece Brothers. One day, while crossing the river near the barn with a large load of

lumber, when the river was high, one of the hired men came to the crossing on the other side of the river to watch me cross. When I went into the river, my wheels sank into the sand, so that my little oxen could only pull the wagon a rod or two at a time, but they got through. The man who was watching me and who was known as Montana Job, declared, with an oath, that he had never seen oxen pull like that in all his life, "and," he added, "You never swore at them either."

The Bishop said he would try again and if he could not get oxen from somebody else, I would have to let mine go, as the request from the Temple Mill had to be complied with. He returned in a few days and said that he had been unable to get any oxen, and so I must let mine go, which I did. In return for them I obtained a little mare that was lame and balky.

When about sixteen years of age a fever sore broke out on my leg, and the bone decayed. It was thought that I would lose my leg, but through the care of Sister Laker of St. Charles, who was employed to nurse me, and Bishop William H. Lee of Woodruff, who secured some ointment made by his father who was a doctor at Bountiful, together with the faith of the Priesthood, my leg was saved, although a bone four inches long was extracted.

When I was just beginning to get around on my leg, a boy came alone one day riding a broncho horse and wanted me to try him, which I did, with the result that he fell over backwards with me, and the cantle of the saddle struck my other leg, breaking it in two. This accident laid me up again for some time.

About the year 1877 I decided to build a home for my mother, being encouraged to do so by some friends who prof-

ferred to assist me. Going into the canyon I got out a set of house logs and saw logs, and took them to the saw mill where they were sawed into lumber. A man by the name of Enoch Shafer, who was a good woodman, proposed to hew the logs, if I would board him, which I did. Samuel Brough did all the plastering and built the chimney free, and a number of men assisted in laying up the house and putting on the roof. In this way I got my house completed. But, as the location was in the west part of town, a long distance from my sister's home, I traded it for a house and lot across the street from my sister's place, which pleased mother very much.

About this time I was employed by William Tyson who kept the Co-operative store at Randolph. I did the freighting for the store and other work. Mrs. Tyson, who was a close friend of mother's, and a very choice woman, was very kind to me, treating me like I was her own son. I continued to work for Brother Tyson until I was married. One little incident happened while I was working for him which was quite amusing to me. We were on our way down to the B. Q. Ranch on a load of hay. I was driving the team, when we came to a very sidling dugway. Brother Tyson told me to stop and let him drive, as he was afraid I would tip the load over. I gave him the lines, got down off the load and walked behind the wagon. He had not gone far when he tipped over upside down and was buried under the hay. After some difficulty I succeeded in getting him out. When he was crawling out of the hay, I said, "I am glad I was not on the load." He answered, "I can tell you there was a better man than you on that load today."

CHAPTER VI

THE YEAR OF OUR MARRIAGE

On the 8th day of May, 1878, I married Agnes Smith, on her 20th birthday. We were married by Edwin Spencer, a Justice of the Peace. We had intended to go to Salt Lake



MRS. AGNES SMITH BAXTER
AGE 24

City to be married in the Endowment House, but that house was closed at that time, and on account of the death of my wife's mother, and Agnes being alone, we thought best

to get married at once. We had quite an elaborate wedding reception, for that early day. Thirty persons were present. It was a Pioneer party and pretty well mixed with the sublime and the ridiculous. We had all the church dignitaries of the ward, all our neighbors, and some pretty rough boys. The banquet was all that could be expected. My wife did nearly all the cooking the day previous to the wedding, and everything was in good preparation. The decorations were not extravagant, but very nice and attractive. After the banquet, the evening, until midnight, was spent in songs, recitations, speeches, jokes, etc. One leading feature in the program was the then popular song "Will You Love Me When I'm Old" sung by the bride and rendered very beautifully. The bride was dressed in a white Swiss Muslin dress and to me she looked very charming. William Tyson, who was a very serious man usually, threw off all restraint on this occasion, and was filled with hilarity; he sang songs, joked and danced during the evening. Mrs. Norris, the mother of Walter and Hyrum J. Norris, sen., although advanced in years, seemed to take on new life and contributed two or three songs to the program, one of which was "Lord Bateman was a Noble Lord, a Noble Lord of High Degree," which had thirty verses. At the close of her rendition she said she had another one with thirty-six verses; but as some of the guests had to get home in the morning to do their chores, we saved the thirty-six verses for another time. The following night we gave a grand ball to which every one was invited.

In September of the same year we went to Salt Lake City and were sealed in the Endowment House by Daniel H. Wells. At this time I was also ordained an Elder.

After returning home I was again employed by William

Tyson, who had a contract to build a canal from Twin Creeks to the B. Q. Ranch. I worked upon this canal from start to finish. Then I was sent by Brother Tyson to work on a dam to raise Sucker Springs, a very large spring that flowed directly from the mountain into Bear River. The idea was to raise the spring, so that the water could be conveyed to the Home Ranch for the purpose of watering stock and also for irrigating purposes; but the undertaking was not a success, for the waters of the spring, after rising to a certain height, would find an outlet in the mountain.

After this I was employed at a shingle mill at Randolph owned by Howard & Harper. My employment was bunching shingles and I became quite an expert at this work, and could keep up with the mill which cut twenty thousand shingles per day. About the first of July, 1879, the boiler of this shingle mill exploded and blew the mill to pieces, killing the engineer and a six-year-old son of Howard's, and very seriously injuring William Howard and Harvey Harper; also two of the employees. I was providentially saved from injury. After conversing with the engineer, I had just turned to go out of the mill, when the boiler exploded. Harper, who was directly behind me, was struck by a log which threw him against me, knocked me down, but I was not hurt.

Furnished with a good team I was sent to Evanston for a doctor and instructed to drive as fast as I could, and change teams at Woodruff. When I arrived at Woodruff, I found that there was not a man in town; they were all in the timber working at a saw mill. Learning that Savannah C. Putnam was down at the river on his ranch, I drove down to him and told him my business. He said he did not know of a team that could be had, but would go up to the settlement with me and see what could be done. Just as we

reached Woodruff, a band of wild horses was brought in and corralled. We looked through the band and found two that we thought had been worked. We put them in the rig and I took the lines and was off. I made good time to Evanston where I tied the horses up on Front Street until the doctor was ready, and made the return trip as far as Woodruff. By this time this team was just about played out. On nearing Woodruff, I met a man who stopped me, and wanted to know what I was doing with these horses. I told him the circumstances and asked him if the horses were his. He said, No, they belonged to a man in Evanston, but he had charge of them, and it was all right. I was pleased that the owner of the horses did not meet me while I had the horses in Evanston.

In the fall of the same year Nathaniel M. Hodges of Laketown, who was running a saw and shingle mill between Bear Lake and Cache Valley, west of Meadowville, sent for me to come and bunch shingles for him. When I arrived at the mill, Joseph Irwin was bunching shingles, but as he had no experience in such work, shingles were piled up all around him, until he could not be seen. Upon seeing me, he climbed up out of his nest among the shingles, and I took his place much to his joy, and soon commenced to clear up the accumulation of shingles.

While I was working there, "Ike" Smith, my wife's brother, was dragging logs into the mill with a yoke of oxen. He was caught between a drag and a tree, whereby his leg was broken in two places, and very badly crushed.

After the accident I started on foot to go to Laketown for a doctor, a distance of about twelve miles. When I was about three or four miles from the mill, and while going down a hill through thick quaking asp, I suddenly came onto

four bears gathered around the carcass of a dead horse. There were two old bears and two young ones. They did not pay very much attention to me. One of the old ones raised on his haunches and growled, but I did not stop to see or hear anything more. I ran down that hill like the wind and did not slack my pace until I knew I was out of danger. Stopping at Meadowville I borrowed a little saddle pony from Brother Gordon, and then went on to Laketown. There I found Dr. Frank Bevans, and told him my errand. He said he would go right up to the mill, and so I went on to Randolph, after having secured a good saddle horse at Laketown. When I arrived at Randolph, I made arrangements to take my wife to the mill to nurse her brother. With a wagon and a very old and slow yoke of oxen I started out the next morning for the mill with all our belongings. The first night we camped under a large willow bush, about two miles west of Laketown, and the next day, in the afternoon, we arrived at the mill. Upon arriving, we learned that the doctor started out for the mill on the evening I called upon him; but that when he got to where I saw the bears, which were still there and would not let him pass, he went back to Laketown and waiting till morning, when he made a new start, taking another man with him; the bears had then left. (I had neglected to tell the doctor about the bears the evening that I called him.) "Ike" Smith had laid and suffered all that time before he got his leg set and was in very bad condition when the doctor arrived.

We remained at the Hodges' Mill until October. "Ike" was sent to Paris, Idaho, to the home of his brother, John Smith, as soon as he could be moved. In October the snow fell so deep that the mill had to be closed down for the winter, and so all the people moved away.

CHAPTER VII

WINTER IN THE MOUNTAINS

After the closing down of Hodges' Mill, I found employment at the United Order Mill at the head of Logan Canyon, and about twelve miles west of Garden City. I built a log house with one large room and one bedroom. We then took some of the loggers and mill hands to board. It was while I was at Logan, purchasing supplies, that I first became acquainted with my father's family, at Wellsville. A friend of mine, Samuel Smith, who was with me at the time, accompanied me to Wellsville on horseback. We were dressed in our work clothes and looked pretty rough. When we arrived at my father's house on a Sunday, the family were all at Sunday School, except my youngest sister Maggie, who had remained at home to get dinner. But when we got there, she was not getting dinner, but had a young man with her, and they were entertaining each other as young folks do. I saw at once that we were unwelcome visitors. My father kept the stray pound at that time, and as she thought we were looking for stray cattle she did not invite us in. I said that we would come in and stay until the family returned from Sunday School which we did very much to the discomfort of Sister Maggie.

Sometime before, I had met one of my brothers, Willard, who had visited us at Randolph when I was a boy. When the Sunday School was over, members of the family began to come in, but none of them paid any attention to us, until finally Willard entered, and after a little conversation with the folks, he began a conversation with us, and then,

perhaps recognizing me, he asked me if my name was not Baxter. I said it was. He further inquired, "Are you John Baxter of Randolph?" I replied, "I am." Then there was an uproar in the house, and immediately they sent for father and Aunt Jane, telling them of my presence. To say every one was pleased to see me, would be putting it very mildly. My Aunt Jane, in her characteristic Scotch manner, stood me up against the wall for inspection. She called all the people around me (and by this time there was a houseful of them), turned me around from one side to another, and asked them who I looked like. Some said I resembled one of the family and some another. One said I had eyes like this one and had a nose like another and still a mouth like someone else, and so on. While I was going through this ordeal my companion Sam Smith was sitting in a corner nearly splitting his sides with laughter. Maggie just flew around then and got the dinner in very short order, and we certainly were the honored guests of the household.

During this time father was sitting in the background evidently enjoying the scene, but said not a word.

Shortly after returning to the mill with the supplies for the winter, the snow fell so deep that the mill closed down, and the mill hands returned to their homes, but the loggers still thought they could work all winter. We had a supply of food, sufficient for eight or ten men through the winter, but at length the snow fell so deep that it was impossible for the men to work, so they all left and went to their homes.

After this only my wife's brother James Smith, his wife and their little baby, a few months old, our friend Samuel Smith, my wife and I, were left at the mill. We had plenty of food and could have remained there all winter, as was

our intention; but, the snow fell in December for thirteen days, and when the weather finally cleared up, the snow was twelve feet deep at our cabin, which of course was covered completely. Between the cabin and the stream, from which we hauled the water for our household uses, the snow stood like two walls one on each side of the path that we had shovelled each day. Being thus shut in the women got homesick, so much so, that they were determined to "get out of there" at all hazards. We had skis and were all quite expert in using them, so we manufactured some snow-shoe-sleighs and made preparations to go over the mountain and down to Garden City. The first day was bright and clear. We took our beds, some food and a trunk with our clothes, and we three men with a snow-shoe-sleigh each and our skis made our way to the top of the summit, the distance being about three miles; but it took us all day to get up there. It took us only about half an hour to get back to the cabin.

The next morning, very early, we made a start with the women. We had a nice little sleigh for the baby; the rest of us traveled on skis. A large cat called Toby followed the procession. After going a mile or two, Toby got frightened at a porcupine and climbed a tree. That was the last we ever saw of Toby.

We got along very well on our climb to the top of the summit, where we arrived in the evening. We cut a lot of logs for a fire and pine boughs for beds for the women, which made them quite comfortable. The men sat up and kept a big fire going all night.

Breakfast over in the morning, we made a good early start. We travelled due east, directing our course toward Garden City as near as possible. We knew that if we took

a direct line the distance to the town would not be more than eight or nine miles. The snow, however, was falling fast, and our skis would not work at all, as the wet snow would stick to them and clog them, thus hindering our progress very much. We had two snow-shoe-sleighs, one for the baby, and we carried our trunk on the other. The baby's father pulled her sleigh, while Sam Smith and I took turns in pulling the sleigh with the trunk. The women had an awful time with their skis, and finally had to abandon them entirely and wade through the snow which was sometimes up to their waists.

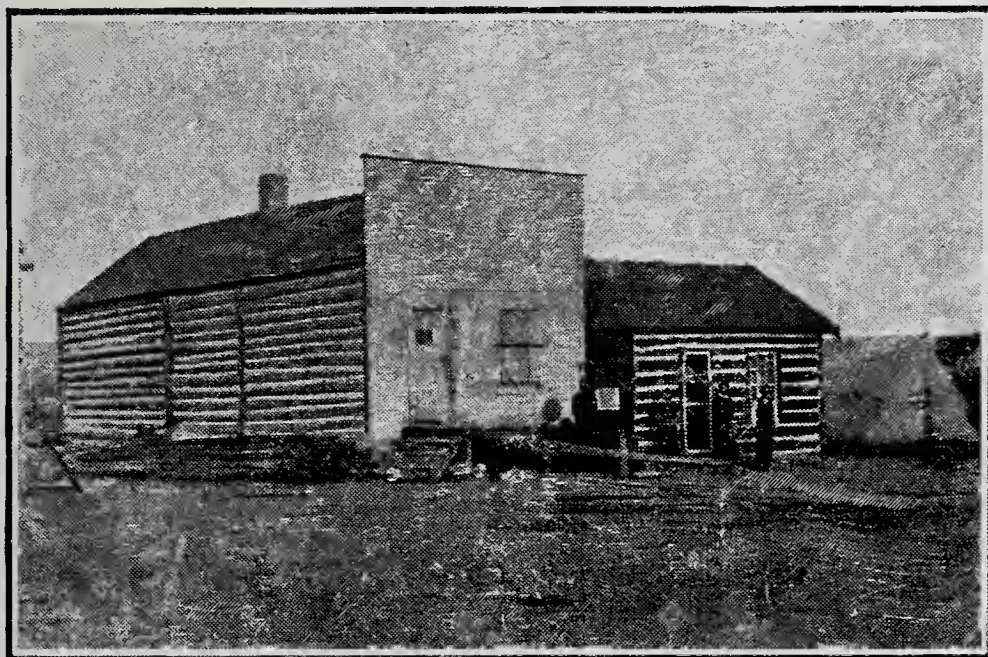
While we were going around a mountain side, the sleigh with the baby tipped over, and the box and baby rolled down the hill. We ran down the steep slope to where it was and found the "little thing laughing" and enjoying it. After getting the baby in place again, we trudged along as best we could, but did not make much headway, having to stop every few minutes to rest. We kept this up until the darkness of night set in, when we were all completely worn out, cold and hungry. We could go no farther, and so we stopped to make a fire. James Smith said he would try and make his way to Garden City and get help. When he left, we all sat on the snow around the fire, which kept going down in the snow deeper and deeper, so that we did not get much benefit from it. Our clothing was wet and began to freeze, and soon our clothes were stiff and very uncomfortable. In this way we waited and hoped and prayed that "Jim" would reach Garden City and get help. Finally, we heard someone shout. We answered the call; then it was not long until our brother "Jim" and two other men made their appearance; they were certainly welcome to our camp. About half a mile from where "Jim" left us, he came into a canyon which had a good road

used by the Garden City people, to haul wood out of the canyon. He was not long then in reaching Garden City, where he found willing hands and men to bring a team to the rescue of our company. Being unable to get the sleigh to our camp, they brought the horses, on which the women were placed, while Sam Smith and I took hold of the tails of the horses and in this way were helped through the deep snow to the sleigh. Soon we were loaded in the sleigh and were on our way to Garden City about four miles distant. Arriving there, we were taken in and cared for by William Dustin and his wife, who were old friends of ours, as well as our rescuers. They had one room for us, so the women made their bed on the floor and went to bed in their wet clothes, while we men sat around the stove all night. Upon awaking next morning, we found ourselves none the worse for our thrilling experience. That day I took some skis and went back to the camp where we had left the trunk the night before, and brought the same to town. The next day a terrible blizzard arose which swept over the mountains which we had just crossed. Had we been caught in that storm, we would most likely have perished. We remained a week in Garden City before we succeeded in getting friends from Randolph to come and take us home.

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE MERCANTILE BUSINESS

Soon after I returned home from the U. O. Mill, William Tyson who was running the Cooperative Store at Randolph, decided to give it up, and I was asked to take it over, which I did. The agreement was that I should have eight per cent profit on the sales. The store consisted of a log building about eighteen feet wide and forty feet long



OUR FIRST HOME AND STORE

with a partition about midway, the front part being the store and the back part the warehouse. There was about \$2,000 in stock. I built a log house with a dirt roof at the side of the store, in which I lived with my wife.

Soon after getting established in this way, we learned that Mrs. William Francome, who had been divorced by her

husband, had some meadow land on Big Creek, for sale, about a mile east of town. This land had formerly been owned by William Howard, who built a dam across the creek to bring the water out on both sides. This was the first dam put in Big Creek, to my knowledge, for the purpose of irrigating. A dam had been put in the creek before that, but it was for a saw mill race. The piece of land that Mrs. Francome owned comprised 120 acres, and at that time was the only irrigated meadow in the valley. The people got their hay from the overflow of the river and Otter Creek which spread over large tracts of country and made hundreds of tons of hay. Mrs. Francome asked \$500 for her meadow which was very cheap. I bought the place from her, paid her \$100 down and gave my notes for \$400 to be paid in four annual payments. The court afterwards raised the price of the land to \$600, so I had to pay another \$100, but at that rate it was still a good bargain, as the land produced about 75 tons of hay of good quality yearly. I took care of this place and did the freighting for the store, while my wife did practically all the clerking in the store. I baled hay and shipped it to Green River, Wyoming, each year, and in that way had no difficulty in making my payments on the place.

Mrs. Gravison, a Danish woman and a widow, had twenty acres of meadow land adjoining mine, which could be watered from my dam. When she moved to Evanston, Wyoming, she offered to sell me her land for three tons of hay to be delivered at Evanston. In the fall of the year I cut the hay off the land and hauled three tons to Evanston, and got the deed to the land which was very much like obtaining something for nothing.

These two land purchases proved to be our start financially. The store was doing a very good business, and the

directors raised our salary from eight to ten per cent of the sales. Besides, I was getting a nice revenue from my ranch, and I got a market at Rock Springs and Green River, Wyoming, for all the surplus hay and grain the people had and gave the people employment in freighting it to the railroad. I also found a market for the butter and eggs that were produced, and all of this went through the store and increased the dividends of the stockholders, and it also increased our salary. We remained in the store six years, and besides paying the stockholders a good dividend on their investment, we increased the stock to more than double of what it was when we first took it over.

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About this time, a proposition was made to me to go into the cattle business. "Ike" Smith, my wife's brother, was running a store and a hotel at Fossil, Wyoming, where he made good money. Alfred G. Rex, my wife's sister's husband, a machinist in the round house at Evanston, worked for the Union Pacific Railroad, also had surplus money. They proposed to organize a cattle company, and they would buy cattle and put them in the company, and take over my ranch. This looked good to me, so I accepted the proposition and gave up the store business.

At the time we went into the store business, my sister's little girl Phoebe Peart came to live with us; she was a sweet child and of a very loving disposition, and we became very much attached to her, and she to us. She remained with us most of the time until she was married, and was a great comfort to us, as we had no children of our own; she loved us quite as much, I think, as she loved her father and mother.

Shortly after going into the store business, I took the agency for organs and bought my wife the first organ that came to Randolph. I also bought one for the meeting house

and secured the services of Nellie Price of Paris, Idaho, as a music teacher. She gave my wife and a number of young people of Randolph music lessons; all these used our organ and the Church organ for practicing. This was the starting of the musical interests in Randolph, so far as the organ was concerned, and there were no pianos in the country at that time. The only music taught before this time was vocal, given by Archibald McKinnon as instructor.

In those days there were no public enterprises at Randolph in which I was not engaged. I was chairman of the dance committee, leader of the dramatic association, etc. In the spiritual activities of the ward I was assistant in Mutual Improvement Association work, ward teacher, etc. My wife was organist and a member of the ward choir, and she also labored in the Primary Association and performed other duties in the ward. She even acted in the capacity of a deacon and cleaned up the meeting house, so we were pretty active people. At this time we also commenced to entertain the general authorities of the Church, and presidency of the Stake when they visited the ward.

While living in our dirt-roofed cabin by the store, we entertained Apostle George Teasdale and Edward Stevenson, later one of the First Council of Seventy, also Pres. William Budge and James H. Hart of the Bear Lake Stake presidency. I also contributed to the building of the Salt Lake Temple, the Logan Temple, the Bear Lake Stake Tabernacle, and the Fielding Academy at Paris, Idaho, and assisted in the construction of the adobe meeting house at Randolph, hauling all the sand which was used in the building; and after it was finished I purchased a bell and had it hung in the belfry. I did not pay for the bell, however, but did my share.

I was ordained a Seventy, July 6, 1874, by Mosiah Booth and was soon afterwards set apart as one of the presidents of the 102nd Quorum of Seventy. In 1884 I was elected treasurer of Rich County. In 1886 I was elected county clerk of Rich County, and the same year appointed clerk of the Randolph Ward, and superintendent of the



OUR RANDOLPH HOME, ERECTED IN 1887
PHOTOGRAPHED IN 1932

ward Sunday School. The same year I entered into the cattle business with my brothers-in-law.

In 1887 I built a new house, a one-story frame, which at that time was the best house in town. I set out trees around it, built a picket fence in front, which made us a very attractive and comfortable home. At this time I traded for an eighty-acre farm on Big Creek, near the mouth of the canyon. It was good, but in a wild state. I fenced it, broke it up and put twenty acres of it under cultivation.

CHAPTER IX

A MISSION TO THE SOUTH

In the fall of 1887 I received a letter from Box B., calling me on a mission to the Southern States. This call to a mission at this time was perhaps the greatest test of my faith that I have had in my life. Our cattle business was thriving wonderfully. Mr. Smith was consuming a great deal of our beef at Fossil, in his hotel and butcher shop, and sending in a lot of money each month. Mr. Rex at Evanston was sending in all his surplus earnings. We had built large and expensive cattle sheds, and to all appearance it would not be long before the cattle company would be wealthy. I had in my early life a great desire to become a "cattle king."

However, I decided that I would respond to the call, and presented the matter to my partners. They protested most vigorously and said I could not go. The cattle were all on the range, and I was the only one that knew anything about them. We were just getting started nicely in the business, and my leaving at this time would mean a dissolution of the company and a great loss to all of us. This, of course, was all true, and from a business viewpoint would be a very foolish thing to do. My partners were not members of the Church, and had no faith in the Gospel, and of course our viewpoints were quite different. I told them that I was very sorry that the call had come at this time, but that I must respond. So I went to work at once to gather the cattle and made preparations to go on my mission.

In six months the cattle were all gathered and disposed

of, and the company dissolved. Having taken my ranch back, all sheds constructed on my property was turned over to me, after which only a small bunch of beef steers were left to me as my share in the division. I sold these steers and set up a millinery and dry goods store in the parlor of our house, as a means for my wife to make a living, while I was away, and I sold my farm to Peter Johnson for \$300, which amount was to be used for the expense of my mission. I rented my meadow to "Ike" Smith for two years, but owing to a drouth the following year I got very little for it. When I had made all these arrangements, I reported to the Presidency of the Church that I was ready to go on my mission.

On April 4, 1888, my wife and I left for Salt Lake City, where we attended the General Conference, after which we took the train, and she accompanied me as far as Evanston, where we parted, she going to our home at Randolph, while I started on my mission in company with Elder S. L. Clark from Mill Creek, Utah. Bishop James Brown of Evanston Ward was at the depot at Evanston to see me off. We stopped over a day at Denver, sight-seeing, including the Panorama of the Battle of Gettysburg. We also stayed at Kansas City a day to take in the sights, and at Memphis, Tennessee, we parted, Elder Clark having been assigned to Chattanooga, and I was to meet my missionary companion, Elder William W. Ruby, at Independence, Mississippi. I was directed to take the Mississippi Valley Railway to Coldwater station. Independence was ten miles south of Coldwater. On arriving at Independence, I learned that Elder Ruby had been there for about three weeks, but had left and none seemed to know where he had gone. However, finding a friend where he had stayed, I traced him from one place to another, and finally, after a week's search, I

learned that he had gone to a place called Denman, away down in the Mississippi bottoms in Tallahatchie County.

At this time a very bitter feeling existed against the "Mormons" in the South. Congress had passed the Edmunds-Tucker Bill. The leaders of the Church were imprisoned or driven into exile. Many of the brethren were brought before the courts and were fined or imprisoned, while many were in hiding, and their families destitute of the necessities of life. Church property had been confiscated, missionaries were being mobbed and killed, and the devil was on the rampage. It was the darkest hour of the Church since the expulsion of the Saints from Illinois, in 1846. Pres. John Morgan, who had presided over the Southern States Mission for many years, said to me "that the South now seemed as brass over your head and as iron under your feet."

After receiving information about Elder Ruby, I trudged back on foot to Coldwater Station, carrying my heavy satchels. The sun was hot and I was tired out. After walking about six miles, I sat down to rest, when a negro came along with a wagon, and I hired him to take me and my satchels to the station. When I arrived there, I found I could not get a train till morning, so I put up at a hotel that night. Next morning I took the train to Harrison Station, thinking I could hire a conveyance there to take me to Denman. I put up at a hotel at Harrison, which was kept by a widow, whose husband was killed in the war. She had an educated daughter, who was quite talented, and after a short conversation, in which the lady told me "that her husband was a wealthy planter before the war, that she had servants on every hand to serve her, and never had had to do any work, but that now the plantation was gone and her husband was dead,

she had to make her own living.” After relating her story, she left her daughter to entertain me. After playing the piano for some time, we entered into conversation. When I informed her that I was a “Mormon” Elder, the piano stopped and the conversation suddenly ended and I was left alone. I laid down on the lounge, and took a nap, but was awakened by a group of young people on the porch. They wanted to come in and sing, so I took a stroll around the town and tried to get a conveyance to take me to Denman postoffice. I then found that I had left the train at the wrong place, and that I should have gone to the next station. I then took the train to that station, where I had to stay all night. The next morning I took the stage coach to Denman. Upon arriving there, I found Elder Ruby at a saw mill, about three miles from the Denman postoffice. A family of Saints, living there, were running the mill. I was very kindly received by these Saints and found Elder Ruby to be a very fine man. The family of Saints named Guthrie were very choice people. I was very happy at last to reach my field of labor. There were two other families of Saints at the saw mill named Helms, who were brothers.

Next morning Elder Ruby and I took a walk down to a lake. We caught a few fish and spent the day in conversation. He informed me that a bitter feeling prevailed in the neighborhood and that there were threats of mobbing. On our return that evening we received word from Mr. Denman, the owner of the plantation and the mill, that we were not permitted to preach on his plantation. If we did, he would raise a mob and drive us out of the country. Consequently we did not attempt to hold any meetings, but had fireside conversations with people whenever we had an opportunity.

Elder Ruby had left his satchels at a railway station in the care of a negro, while en route to the Denman post-office, about thirty miles away; so, after spending a few days around Denman, we decided to go and get the satchels. This trip occupied several days, as we had gospel conversations on the way whenever we had an opportunity. We found the satchels all right, the negro having taken good care of them. That is a characteristic of the negro; if you trust them with anything, you can depend upon them. We then made our way back to Denman and visited with our friends there a few days.

In the meantime Mr. Denman cut off the supplies from Bro. Guthrie and the Helms, saying, "If you feed those Mormon Elders you will get no more supplies from me." On the following Saturday evening we went down the creek about a half mile to bathe. While we were in bathing, we heard a shrill whistle, and all at once a number of men on horseback, armed with guns, rode up and surrounded us, demanded that we dress at once and go with them. In the excitement Elder Ruby got my shirt on and I got his. I got my leg in the sleeve of my underwear, and we had quite a time getting dressed. The ringleader of the mob said they wanted us to leave the country. We asked: "What have we done?" They said: "That makes no difference, you must leave." We tried to reason with them, but they said, "We have not come to reason, but to drive you out of the country; and if you don't leave peaceably, we will resort to force." We finally told them that if they would give us time to gather up our books and clothing, we would leave the next morning, and to this they agreed. We gathered the books that we had loaned to our friends, got our clothing together and bade good bye to our friends. We were sorry to leave

the place, for we had made some very staunch friends, and a number of people were investigating the Gospel; but it seemed there was nothing else for us to do than to leave. Early in the morning we were waited on by members of the mob and escorted out of the neighborhood. We then went out into the hill country and made some friends and had an opportunity to hold meetings, in school houses.

CHAPTER X

FURTHER TROUBLE WITH MOBS

After being in the hill country for about two weeks, and not receiving any letters from home, our mail all going to the Denman postoffice in care of our friends, we decided to slip in, in the middle of the night, get our mail and come out before daylight, and thus avoid being discovered by the mob; for we knew that they were bad men, who had threatened our lives if we ever showed ourselves in that neighborhood again. These same men had taken six negroes out of jail a few weeks before, and riddled them with bullets, so we knew what kind of fiends we had to contend with.

While we were walking down a lonely path in the woods in the middle of a dark night—so dark that we could hardly see anything—we met a negro coming up the path carrying a lantern. He said he was going for the doctor, as the wife of one of our friends was sick. This particular friend was receiving our mail from the postoffice. We told the negro that he did not need to hurry with the doctor, as we would visit the sick woman and stay with the family a while. When we arrived at the house of our friends we found the lady very sick. After we had administered to her, she was much better.

We received a number of letters from home and stopped to read them; but while reading our letters, the doctor came in. He proved to be one of the ring leaders of the mob, and instead of giving any attention to the sick woman, he, upon seeing us, went out immediately, as we supposed, to gather the mob and cut off our retreat. We then thought that the best thing for us to do was to hide in a cane brake in

the Mississippi Swamps until morning; this we did. About daylight Elder Ruby slipped into the house of one of our friends to learn if anything had happened during the night. He learned that the mob had gathered and were searching for us. We then informed our friends that we would take a trip out into Sunflower County about forty miles from Denman, out in the swamps of the Mississippi River. Elder Ruby knew of some relatives who had lived there many years ago, and thought that perhaps he could get some genealogical information from the cemetery and that in the meantime the mob would be quieted down, so that we could pass through and get out into the hill country again. Only one path led in and out of the swamps and that path led through Denman. The malaria was so bad in the swamp country that white people could not live there. The inhabitants were all negroes, except the foreman of a large plantation. On our trip we stopped over night with a Mr. Ferguson who had married a relative of Elder Ruby. She, however, had been dead about ten years. Mr. Ferguson treated us very kindly, and after breakfast took us over his plantation which consisted of 800 acres of corn and cotton, and he employed two hundred negroes. This was the finest plantation I had seen in the state. Mr. Ferguson directed us on our way, and said that a stretch of country, in which there were no plantations, lay before us. We continued our journey and crossed the Talahatchie River on the ferry. Calling at a store in this place to get a few crackers, we found a lot of tough-looking men, and, as we were about to leave, these men enquired where we were from. After telling them that we were from Utah, they began to question us about Utah and the "Mormons" and about Brigham Young and his wives. They claimed to know all about Utah and would not believe any thing we said.

Hence we got out of the place as soon as we could. On our way we were overtaken by a negro with a team; he let us ride for fifteen miles charging us fifty cents; but when he learned that we were preachers he would not take the money. We soon reached our destination, and, after calling at several negro cabins, we were directed to the home of the plantation foreman. We requested of him that we be allowed to stay overnight. He was quite a gruff fellow and said. "I reckon," so we went into the house. He was a batchelor and had a friend stopping with him, from Memphis, Tenn., who was also a batchelor. We did not tell them at once who we were, but when we entered into conversation, we told them that we were from Utah. They were quite shocked at hearing this and suggested that we had better not tell anyone around there that we were from Utah. He said that "Mormon" preachers from Utah had passed through the country recently and the people had threatened to shoot them like dogs. He asked if we were acquainted with any "Mormons" and we frankly told them that we were "Mormon" preachers. I thought from the look the two men gave us that it was all up with us. But we started to talk with them and gave them each a copy of the Articles of Faith, which they read, after which we had a long talk and made friends with them. But they plead with us not to let anyone along the road know who we were, for the people living all the way from "the stretch" to the River would surely hang us. They gave us a good supper and a good bed.

We ate our breakfast, and Elder Ruby got some genealogical information, and we were ready to start on our return journey. Just as we were ready to leave, and were standing on the front porch, two negroes came to the door, one leading a beautiful horse with a saddle on, while the other had a large

whip and a rifle. Mr. Terrill, the overseer and our host, mounted his horse, took the gun and whip, and bid us good bye, saying, "If you ever pass this way again, be sure to stop." "Furthermore," he said, "I intend going to Utah next summer to see the country and learn more about the Mormon people." After he left, I asked the negro what he was going to do with the gun and whip. He said the gun was carried, so that in case any of the niggers were rebellious he could shoot them. The whip was used on the young niggers when they refused to work. We walked thirty miles that day on our return journey, and when we got within ten miles of Denman we met Brothers Guthrie and Joseph Helms, who had been watching for our return to inform us that the mob had learned where we had gone, and pickets had been set at all the cross roads watching for us. Our friends informed us that we must not fall into their hands again, as our lives in that case would be taken. On learning this, we went out some distance from the road and got in a cane brake, where our friends remained with us until after dark: then they, under cover of darkness, piloted us, by one going before and the other behind so that a signal could be given if any one approached. In this way we got within a mile or two of Denman. We then hid in a cane brake, and our friends left to get us something to eat. As we had travelled all day and nearly all night without food, and the rain had fallen nearly all the time, we were completely exhausted. Our brethren finally returned with food. Thus the night was passed. When daylight approached, our friends said that it would not be safe for us to leave the swamps during the daytime and so we laid in the cane brakes all day, until 10 o'clock at night. Then our friends returned to pilot us out into the hill country.

In the morning, after the rain, the malaria rising from the ground was so strong that we could hardly breathe until we made a small fire and put our faces close to it. We made our way through the corn fields in the same manner as the night before, and occasionally came onto the road. About midnight we heard a gun fired and then others in different directions, so we all concluded that the mobbers had decided to disperse for the night. Shortly after this, we heard the sound of horses' feet and heard men talking as they came into the road, but not near enough to know what was being said. We laid very low then and kept very quiet for about an hour; then we cautiously proceeded on our way in the same manner as before. Our suspicions were confirmed when, coming to a cross road, we found a fire still burning where the mob had been watching for us. By being very careful, we succeeded in getting out into the hill country, where we were safe. After traveling beyond Denman about five or six miles, our friends left us, and returned to their homes to get food for us. Shortly after they left, my companion fainted, his eyes rolled in his head and I thought he was dying. This was the most critical time of all my experience. I prayed most earnestly for him and he recovered. Our friends came soon after sunrise with food for us, and after partaking of this food, my companion was refreshed. We bid good bye to our friends and went on our way in search of new ones, but never again saw the faithful friends who were willing to risk their lives to save ours from the violence of the brutal mobs.

CHAPTER XI

SUNSHINE AFTER CLOUDS

After travelling through the rain and mud for several miles, we endeavored to find a place to stay all night. After trying in vain several places, we were at last taken into one of the homes and given supper and a good bed. My clothing was so wet and muddy that I was ashamed to get in between the sheets, but there was nothing else to do, so we went to bed and slept sound until morning.

We stayed in this neighborhood a few days, but as there was no prospect for making an opening for preaching here, we decided to call on some friends we had made when going to get Elder Ruby's satchels. We called upon Squire Tatum, who was very friendly, and also on a friend there by the name of Roebuck. We stayed and visited with these people a few days and obtained permission to hold meetings on Saturday evening and Sunday in a school house. But when we arrived at the school house, we found a notice tacked on the door, forbidding us to preach. The ministers having heard of us had called special meetings in the neighborhood, villifying us and our people, and telling all manner of lies about us. Finding that we could not do anything there, we decided to go further north. After walking fifteen miles we stopped with a Mr. Pickle, who charged us fifty cents each for keeping us over night. At 4 o'clock, the next morning, we started for the railway and took the train to Senatoba, a distance of fifty miles. Thence we walked ten miles to the home of one of the saints by the name of Stuart, a widow lady. She treated us very kindly, and as we were com-

pletely worn out, we decided to rest a few days and clean up, for during the past three weeks we had encountered such terrible experiences that we certainly were in need of a rest. As I had several boils on me and Elder Ruby had rheumatism in his arms, we went out and dug some sassafras root, from which Sister Stuart made us some tea. But this remedy for our sickness was not very effectual; it only created more boils. Learning that some people in that locality would like to hear us preach, we called on a Mr. Floyd who owned the land and school house to inquire if we could hold meetings. He politely refused, saying that we were everywhere spoken evil against. Hence no meetings were held. Sister Stuart had a little girl about ten years old that she wanted baptized. I baptized her, this being the first baptism performed on my mission. Leaving Sister Stuart's place, we walked twenty-five miles to the town of Independence—the place where I first landed before going in search of my missionary companion. The weather was very hot, and we were extremely tired. We remained there a few days and then went to Horn Lake, about ten miles from Memphis, Tenn. Here we found a family of saints by the name of Doc. Mask, where we remained a few days. On the 4th of July Elder Ruby and I went to Memphis, Tenn., to spend the 4th, though we were not acquainted with a single person in that large city. We walked from Horn Lake, a distance of ten miles that morning, and after arriving in the city, we bought a watermelon and ate it, and walked around in the city a while. If there is any place on earth that is lonesome, it is a large city where you do not know anyone. This was the case with us on this 4th of July. In the city of Memphis, Tenn., we were indeed a very lonesome pair of Elders. Towards evening we strolled down to the postoffice building, which is on the bank of the Missis-

issippi River, there being some terraces from the front of the building down to the water's edge, and a steamboat landing at the end of the street. We sat on the bank watching the boats plying up and down the river and spoke of the good times the folks at home were having on Independence day.

At sundown, a large excursion steamer the "Rosa Lee" drew up to the pier and a number of young people went on board. They were a happy crowd full of life and enjoyment. When the steamer started up the river, it was a most beautiful sight. The sun, like a great ball of fire was just setting behind the trees; the band on the boat was playing; the young folks were dancing and very happy. We sat watching the scene until the sun had disappeared behind the trees. The steamboat was soon out of sight around a bend in the river and the sound of merry voices and the music of the band could no longer be heard--nothing now but the throbbing of the great engines and that also gradually faded away. There we sat each one silently absorbed in his own thoughts, homesick? Yes. What would you, kind reader, be, under similar circumstances! After sitting there for some time we arose and said, "Where shall we go, and what shall we do?" A celebration of fireworks, etc., was arranged in the evening at Jackson Mound Park, some distance from the city, down the river, and there we decided we also would go. There was a great crowd at the Park, many families grouped together eating their lunch, and all having a good, social time; but no one paid any attention to us. We remained at the Park until midnight, when all the respectable people left, and those that then remained were what we termed those of the underworld. After getting a glimpse of the doings of these fallen people, we wended our way back to Horn Lake, where we arrived in the early morning. This was

the glorious 4th of July. Two hundred and two years today the fathers of our country raised the flag of liberty, which they had fought so hard to obtain and declared peace and liberty to every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and welcomed them under the wings of the Great American Eagle to be protected in their religious freedom, where they could worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences; and now we "Mormon" Elders travel from place to place, and find that our lives are at stake if we tell that we are Latter-day Saints.

Elder Ruby is not well this morning, and I have boils all over my body, so we are both a little blue, but we shake it off and go on our way. At Horn Lake we baptized two of Doc. Mask's children, July 16, 1888.

Leaving Horn Lake we made our way south as far as Pontotoc County, where we learned that there were some Saints. On the way we tried to get an opening to preach and make friends, but we met with very little success. After a month or so we arrived at Randolph, Pontotoc Co., where we found a little nucleus of saints and friends. We were treated very kindly here and held meetings every Sunday, visited friends and investigators and had many gospel conversations. We found a very dear friend by the name of Mrs. Waldrop—a widow whose husband was killed in the war. Before the war, they had been quite wealthy people, having had a large plantation and owned many slaves; but now all was gone except about one hundred acres of land. On the old homestead everything was neglected, many of the buildings had fallen down, and she was working just enough land to make a living. This good woman, whom we called Aunt Becky, had made a home for the Elders for a number of years; she had a room prepared expressly for

them, so we made this our headquarters in that locality. We spent several months here, going out on trips and returning to this home.

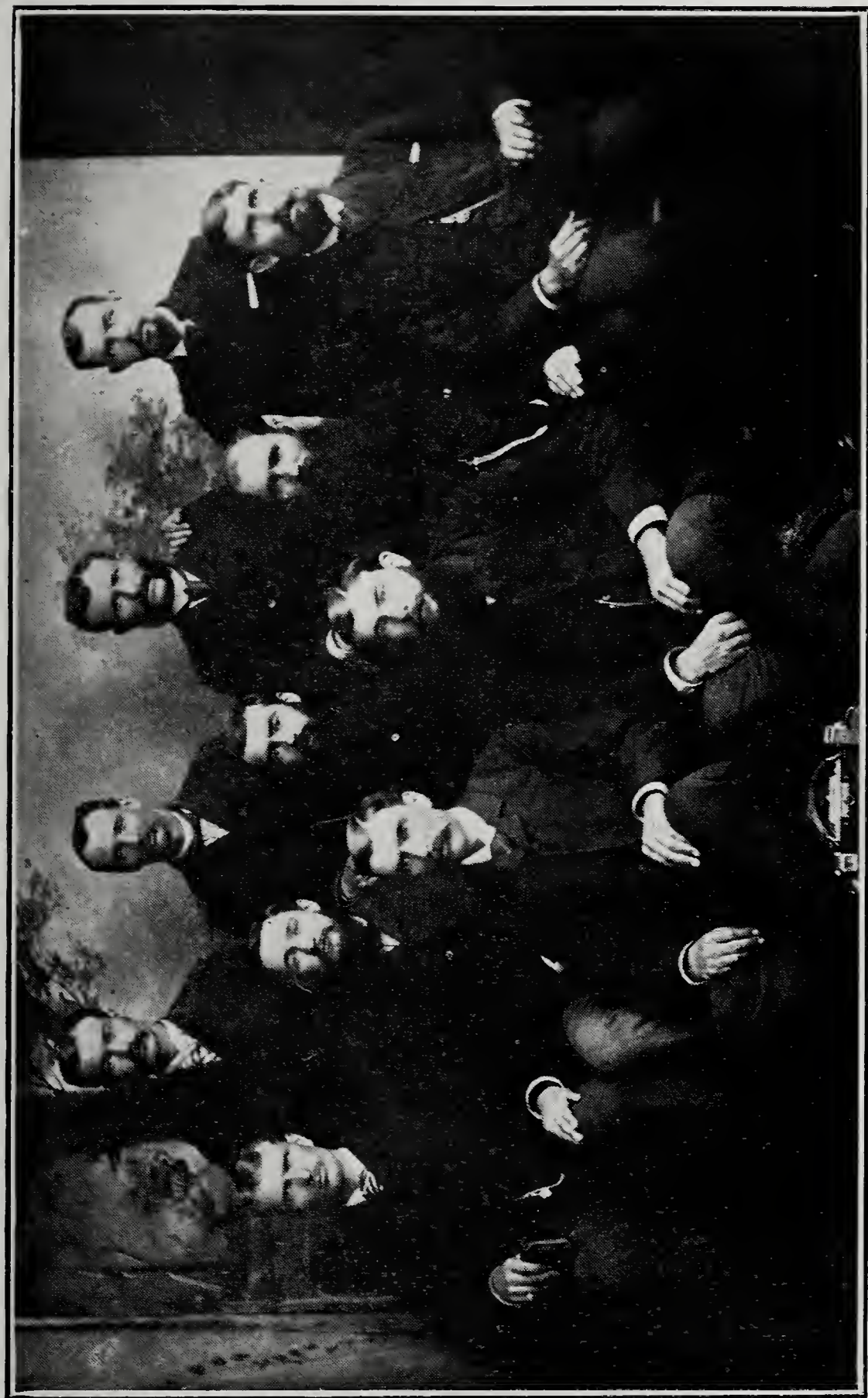
We were successful in opening up a field, about twenty miles south at a place called Schooner River. Here we baptized a number of people and made many friends. Among those we baptized was an old gentleman by the name of Marshall Berry with all his family. We held meetings regularly and had a good time in that locality. Marshall Berry was a large planter and slave owner before the war and was a great horse racer, gambler, and a very hard boiled citizen; but everything he had, he lost in the war; then he settled down and repented of his sins. After laboring around Schooner for a few months, there were whisperings of a mob organizing to drive us out. Marshall Berry was indignant at this and sent word to the intended mobbers to come when they got ready, and he would be ready to meet them.

CHAPTER XII

MOBBED AT MERIDIAN

About this time I first met Elder Israel Barlow, the president of the Mississippi Conference—a very fine man, well informed on the Gospel and a splendid missionary. He and his companion, Henry Wood, both live in Bountiful, Utah. They had labored in another county with very little success, and so they decided to come down to Pontotoc County, Miss., where they had previously labored as missionaries. We received word from Pres. Wm. Spry of the Southern States Mission that a conference would be held at Lusk, Choctaw County, Alabama, about two hundred miles from where we were laboring, so we made preparations for the trip. Pres. Barlow had gone a week or so before, in search of Elder Richards whose companion had been released, and he had been left alone. We had written to him and others, but could not get any trace of him. We had received instructions from mission headquarters, that if an Elder was left alone, he should remain with saints or friends, until a companion was sent to him, for it was very dangerous for an Elder to travel alone. Therefore we were quite concerned about Elder Richards.

As the conference was to be held on the 4th of November, we started on the 26th of October. The first day we walked 22 miles to the railroad at Okolona, where we took a train to Quitman, Clark Co., Miss., arriving there at midnight. We sat in the waiting room until morning, when we resumed our journey on foot. After walking twenty-one miles, we came to Nicholson's Store where we tried to stop



GROUP OF ELDERS

Upper row: Lelt to right: Wm. Thompson, Joseph Bolton, Wm. W. Ruby, John M. Baxter. Middle row: Seth Thomas, Israel Barlow, Wm. Spry, Wm. R. Lee, Henry Wood. Front row: Wm. Oakley, Joseph S. Allen.

all night, but we were not successful. We were tired and hungry and bought some eggs, cheese and crackers and a cup in which to boil our eggs. Then we walked about a mile, made a fire, boiled our eggs and ate our supper. Being very warm from walking, we could not sit long for fear of catching cold. So we started walking a mile or two at a time, and resting, until we got cold again; then we walked some more, keeping this up all night. When morning came, we inquired how far it was to Lusk, and if we were on the right road? We were informed that we were about seven miles from Lusk. After eating the balance of our lunch, we started on our way, nearly worn out, but encouraged to learn that we only had to walk seven miles more. After we had gone what we thought was about six or seven miles we again inquired, and received the unwelcome information, that just after leaving the first place where we inquired, we had taken the wrong road and had gone the opposite direction, and it was now eleven miles to Lusk. Elder Allen was ready to give up in despair. (He and Elders Wood and Thomas had accompanied us on this journey.) My shoe was hurting my foot so badly that I could hardly walk, but we trudged along and finally reached Lusk, and the home of Albert Mosley, where we were kindly received.

The conference held at Lusk, Alabama, was attended by the following Elders of our group: William Spry, president of the Southern States Mission; Israel Barlow, president of the Mississippi Conference; William R. Lee, Seth Thomas, Joseph S. Allen, William W. Ruby, William Okey, Henry Wood, Joseph Bolton, William Thompson and myself. After the conference of two days' duration, it was suggested that we all go together as far as Meridian, Miss., and have our photos taken in a group. We decided that all would walk to

the railway, except Pres. Spry. Some five miles out we had some friends who had horses, and the Elders were sure they could get a horse there for Pres. Spry. We started early in the morning, and when we got to the place where we expected to get the horse, the men were all away from home, and we could not get a riding animal, and so Pres. Spry walked with the rest of us.

We arrived at Quitman, the railway station at 10 o'clock at night, after having walked thirty-five miles that day; we were very tired. After waiting in the station until 4 o'clock in the morning, the train came along and we boarded the same for Meridian, Miss., arriving there about 5 o'clock a. m. After taking breakfast at a hotel, we separated. Some of the Elders purchased clothes, and all met at the photograph gallery and had our picture taken in a group, after which Elder Ruby and I had ours taken together.

While at the photographers it was rumored that we were "Mormon Elders." Going from the photographers to the railroad station we scattered and walked around town. Pres. Spry and some of the Elders registered at the St. Charles Hotel, and some of the others, myself included, registered at another hotel in a different part of the town; while the Elders were registering at the St. Charles Hotel, the captain of police followed them and asked if they were "Mormons." Being answered in the affirmative, he said he did not want them to say one word about their religion, or he would lock them up. Elder Allen and I did not know anything about this, as we were walking around town, looking at the houses, etc. In going down Main Street, we were met by a crowd of men who asked us very pointedly who we were and what we were doing here? I told them that we were ministers of the gospel, that we were passing

through this country and had stopped over during the day to make some purchases. They asked what kind of ministers we were. I answered that we belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called "Mormons." At this, they became enraged and called us all the vile names they could think of, and one of them raised his cane to strike me when a bystander called the police. They then marched us down the street and the crowd increased very fast. The police kept the crowd back and told us to get to our hotel as fast as we could. After walking briskly about one hundred yards, the mob broke loose from the police and pursued us like a pack of hungry wolves. We started to run, but I saw a man close to us with his hand on his hip pocket, commanding us to stop. Believing he would shoot, I stopped. Elder Allen ran on further, but on looking back saw that I had stopped, so he also stopped, and came back to where I was. The mob then took possession of us and hurried us down to the railroad track, and sent a man on horse back to town to get a rope to hang us with, saying they would hang us to the first good telegraph pole they came across.

Filled with evil intentions they yelled and shouted, cursed and swore like so many devils. The leader frothed at the mouth and his eyes turned green like those of a mad dog. The man arrived with the rope, and just as they were preparing to hang us to the telegraph pole, the captain of police with about twenty deputies, all with drawn revolvers, broke in on the crowd and said they would shoot the first man that laid hands on us. The officers then took us away from the mob. This was a critical moment, for I thought surely I would be hanged. Yet I had no fear of death. I thought of the folks at home, but was otherwise calm and

composed. The police formed in a platoon, placing us in the center, and declared if any man tried to take us from them, he would be shot. In this way they took us up to the railway station and locked us in, leaving a policeman to guard us while they went to look for the other Elders. The mob became so enraged that they tried to break in the doors of the station, but the policeman drew his gun, saying, "I will shoot the first man that enters that door." He then took us into the ladies toilet, where we could not be seen by the mob. It was estimated five hundred people had gathered around the station at that time; of course many of them had come through curiosity.

Not long after we had been locked in the ladies toilet we heard the cry, "Here are two more," and the cry that followed almost raised the hair on our heads. In a few seconds Elders Lee and Ruby were ushered into our presence by the police. Leaving a guard over us they left to search for other Elders. After having been locked up an hour or so, the mob had nearly all gone and the policeman that had been left to protect us locked the door of the toilet and the station and left us alone. By this time it was getting dark and Elder Ruby raised a small window, above our heads to see if he could get someone to get the police and let us out. When he raised the window, he saw Elders Barlow and Thompson on the platform. They had come to see what had become of us, as the mob had not recognized them; they had been in the crowd all the time, had watched the whole proceedings, and were very much concerned about our safety, and anxious to know what had become of the other Elders. Elder Ruby explained our condition to them and advised them to leave town at once. Elder Barlow said that a thousand people had surrounded the station when they brought Elders Lee and Ruby in.

Pres. Barlow had an orange and an apple which he handed to us through the window.

Shortly after that we heard a light tapping at the window. When we raised it, a man put his face up to the window and said, "Gentleman, I am your friend; I have relatives in Utah and I know something about the 'Mormons' and have been doing all I could to pacify this mob. They are not going to hurt you: they are nearly all gone and only a few stragglers are left now, and you can be of good cheer. They will not hurt you." This voice sounded like the voice of an angel compared to the threats and abuse to which we had been listening. We do not know who the man was.

Soon the police came and took us to the St. Charles Hotel, where we met Elders Spry, Thomas and Okey, who had been assailed by the mob there, and had been kept quite busy answering questions. We had not been there long, when Elder Ruby and I went upstairs to the dining room. As we were going upstairs, we met a nigger coming down. He stopped and looked at Elder Ruby and said, "Ain't you the man that left a Bible and shirt with me some time ago?" Elder Ruby said, "Yes, where are they?" He answered that if we would wait a moment, he would bring them, and he brought to us Bro. Richards' hymn book, Bible and shirt. It was now evident to us that the murderous fiends who had tried to take our lives had taken the life of our fellow-laborer. We informed the negro that the articles were not ours, but belonged to a companion of ours, and inquired where he went. The negro said that the last he saw of him was about 5 o'clock in the morning, when he (Richards) took a walk down towards the railway tracks.

After supper we were informed that we could not get a train until morning, as the night train did not stop until

it got to Akron, seventy-five miles from Meridian. Believing that we had better get away from Meridian as soon as possible—no difference where we went—we bought tickets to Akron, Ala., and the captain of police, staying with us, saw us safely on the train at 10 o'clock p. m. During the night of the mob violence, and while we were in the St. Charles Hotel, this same chief of police addressed the Elders, saying, as he tapped his star on his breast: "Gentlemen, if it were not for this, I would be one of that mob." He was as much prejudiced against our religion as any of them, but his loyalty to duty as an officer and to his honor as chief of police, caused him to protect us.

After boarding the train, we were very thankful that we were safe again. The train stopped at York, Ala., about 26 miles from Meridian, and we all got off there, except Pres. Spry who continued on his way to Chattanooga, Tenn. The conductor shouted to us that this was not our station, but we did not pay any attention to him. We then started to walk along the railway track, and after walking some distance we all sat down to rest. Elder Ruby had a harmonica and played some lively tunes to cheer us up, but Bro. Allen laid down on the track with his head on the rail for a pillow and in spite of Elder Ruby's music fell fast asleep. When we got ready to go, we had quite a time waking him up, and after walking about six miles we came to the home of Brother Jesse Crosby about 3 o'clock in the morning. We slept there until 9 o'clock, when we ate breakfast and then walked a short distance to Brother Odum's. This was the friend that Elder Richards had started out to visit, when he (Richards) was murdered. Brother Odum informed us that he had written Elder Richards to come and attend a birthday party at his home, but

had received no answer to his invitation. I am not familiar with the details of the finding of Elder Richards' body, but I learned that a man from Chattanooga went into Meridian disguised as a tinker and made inquiries and found from the records of the coroner that an unknown man had been buried near the railway track, just out of Meridian, and upon digging him up Elder Richards was identified by his clothing.

While we were still at the home of Brother Odum, Elders Barlow and Thompson made their appearance, and, O, what a happy meeting! I do not know how they got there, but we were certainly happy to meet again, and to know that all our lives had been spared. After prayer and thanksgiving, we separated, and all went to our respective fields of labor, as follows: Elders Barlow, Wood, Ruby and I to Randolph, Pontotoc Co., Miss., and Elders Thomas and Allen to Liberty Hill, Miss.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BRAVEST MAN I EVER MET

At the conference held at Lusk, Elders Barlow, Ruby and Wood were released to return home and I received a new companion, namely, Clark Brinkerhoff of Moab, Emery Co., Utah, who came to me a few weeks after conference. We helped the Elders to pack up their things to return home and accompanied them to the railway station and bade them good-bye. It was hard to part with them for we had become very much attached to each other.

Elders Brinkerhoff, Allen, Thomas and I remained around Pontotoc County for two or three weeks, when Elders Allen and Thomas went to their field of labor at Liberty Hill, and Brinkerhoff and I went over the Schooner River to our field of labor.

After laboring around Schooner for a few weeks, we received a letter from Frank Stanford, a friend of Marshall Berry's, who lived about eighteen miles south of Berry's place, asking us to pay them a visit. He had some of our tracts and said he was very much interested in our doctrines. He also said that a number of people in his neighborhood would like to hear us preach. We were very glad to accept the invitation, and one fine day, after dinner, we started for the home of Mr. Stanford.

About three miles before we reached his place, we passed through a little village called Colesville, thus named after Jim Cole, a big burly fellow who had married a negro wench. We arrived at the Stanford home about 4 o'clock in the evening. Mr. Stanford was not at home, but his

wife received us very kindly. She informed us that she was a Methodist, and that all her people had been so before her; she would entertain us for her husband's sake, but did not want to hear anything about our religion. We informed her that we had no desire to force our religion upon anyone who did not wish to hear it. We were very kindly entertained until Mr. Stanford came home. We found him a bright and very intelligent man—one who had been associated with the civil affairs of the county for several years. He had held the position of county attorney, sheriff, deputy sheriff and other offices, and was well informed in the law. He manifested a very great interest in our doctrines, as we had supplied him with a number of our tracts before we visited him. In fact, he was of the full blood of Israel and drank in the Gospel truths as a thirsty man would drink pure water. He was so intensely interested that he would sit up night after night with us, discussing the principles of the Gospel. He would call in all the neighbors he could to come to his home to hear us preach and converse upon the doctrines of the Church. We remained with him about two weeks, and had a glorious time visiting the people at their homes and holding meetings at the Stanford home, so much so that we were kept talking nearly all the time. We had many friends and investigators, and it seemed that all was coming our way at last.

One evening we spent the night with a friend by the name of Kimbrough. After spending a very pleasant evening we retired to rest. My companion and I were sleeping in a room which was separated by a porch from the room in which Mr. Kimbrough was sleeping. About 2 o'clock in the morning we were awakened by the sound of voices outside. We listened and heard some gruff voices demand-

ing to know where the "Mormon Elders" were. Mr. Kimbrough pleaded with them to go away and not molest us, saying that we were good men and were not doing any harm to anyone. But they insisted upon him telling them where we were, and threatened him, if he did not do so. He then told them where we were, and the mobbers then came to our door and kicked at it, demanding that we let them in. I got up and let them in and found three big, burly fellows, with shot guns in their hands. They demanded that we dress at once and go with them. We dressed and tried to reason with them, but they said, "We have not come to reason with you," so we decided to go with them. Our satchels and umbrellas were in the room where Mr. Kimbrough was sleeping and I went in for them. I found Mr. Kimbrough sitting in the middle of the bed with a large man standing over him with a shot gun. I got the satchels and umbrellas, bid good-bye to the family, and we went with the mob.

The mob took us out in the woods a mile or two and there we found a number of other men. It was raining and very dark. The mobbers held a council as to what they should do with us; some were in favor of whipping, some of hanging, and others of turning us loose. They could not agree, but leaving a guard of three men over us, they went off some distance and held a council, returning with the decision that they would let us go, if we would leave and never return, but we would not make that promise. They let us go, however, saying, "If you ever return, you will have to take the consequence." Then they left us, and we did not know where we were, or where to go. It was a dense wood, it was raining hard and dark as pitch. We stood under our umbrellas until daylight, when we got our

bearings and made for the Schooner River. After walking about eighteen miles through the mud and rain, we arrived at Brother Marshall Berry's. Here we were kindly received, fed and warmed and furnished with dry clothing. The morning after we were mobbed at Kimbrough's, the news spread over the neighborhood, and our friends in the Stanford district were quite concerned about us and made a search for us. Mr. Stanford, thinking that if we were unharmed, we would go to Berry's, came there and found us. He pleaded with us to come back, and he would protect us, saying, "You have so many friends there that the mob will not dare to molest you." But we thought that it would not be wise to go back immediately, so we requested him to go home and keep in touch with the sentiment of the people; and if things quieted down, and he thought it was safe for all, we would return in about two or three weeks. We continued our labors around Randolph and Schooner for a few weeks, when we received a letter from Mr. Stanford, stating that everything was quiet, and our friends were very anxious to have us come back, that his family consisting of himself, his wife, a daughter about 14 years old, two sons, 20 and 22 years of age were fully converted and ready for baptism; and a number of others were ready to be baptized. He stated further that people came to his home every night to discuss "Mormonism;" and so Elder Brinkerhoff and I decided to go back. We found everything as Mr. Stanford had represented, and we appointed the time and place for baptism. All of Stanford's family and a number of others were ready for baptism.

During our former visit in this neighborhood, we found that a Mrs. Riddle (who had entertained the Elders where she had lived previously to coming into this district) had been

confined to her bed for two years. She desired that we should come and administer to her. Arriving at her home, we found her in a destitute condition; her children were ragged and uncared for and suffering for the necessities of life, as her husband had not been able to attend to his work on account of caring for his wife in her infirmity, and her home was in a very neglected condition. Her husband was not friendly to us, but consented to the administration. After several hours of conversation, in which she expressed full faith in the ordinance of healing, and promised that she would be baptized, we administered to her. While I had my hands upon her head, I received a manifestation that she would be healed, and promised her that she would rise from her bed of affliction and be able to care for her children and her home. On our return at this time, we found her up and well; her house was neat and clean, and her children well cared for and happy, but she received us very coldly, and her husband would not speak to us. We left and never saw her again; but we learned that soon after that she was taken to her bed again.

We had a very enjoyable time at the Stanford home for a few days, but before the appointed time came for the baptisms, while Mr. Stanford and his boys were plowing in the field one morning about a half mile from the house, a negro came in a very excited condition to the men and said that a crowd of men had gathered at Jim Coles armed with shot guns, saying they were going to run the "Mormons" out. Mr. Stanford unhitched from the plow and came to the house at once. He got his firearms all ready and loaded his shot gun with buck shot. He beckoned the two boys in the house; they all remained there for about two hours, and, as no one came, they concluded that the negro was mistaken,

or that the mob had given up the attack, so they all went back to their work.

Before returning to Stanford's, after the first mobbing, the family had a room all prepared for us and stated they had it mob proof, a shot gun was standing in the corner loaded with buck shot, so that we could defend ourselves, if necessary.

Soon after Mr. Stanford and his boys had returned to their work, and we were sitting in our room, two men rode up to the gate, tied up their horses and came into the house. As soon as Mrs. Stanford saw them coming, she sent the daughter for her father. The men came in and informed us that they had a warrant for our arrest for disturbing the peace of Colesville, and stated that he was the constable. He handed the warrant to Brinkerhoff who read it and then handed it to me. I was reading it when Stanford came in. He took the paper out of my hand looked it over, and discovered that it was an old blank and that they had not changed the date. So he said to the constable, as he handed back the warrant, "You can't arrest these men on this warrant, for it is ten years old." The constable said it was a mistake of the Justice of the Peace and he would go back and have it changed. After the two men got a short distance from the house, about twenty men raised up out of the woods, and after a little consultation they all turned back toward Colesville. "Now," said Mr. Stanford, "they will come back, and we will have to protect you." Being satisfied that their arms were in good condition, one boy was stationed in an outhouse, between the house and the gate, and another round the corner of the house in such a way that they could see the mob as they approached the gate, but the mob could not see them. I was given an axe to protect myself, and Elder Brinkerhoff was given something

else, but I do not know what it was. We didn't have long to wait before we saw the men coming down the road, all on horseback and all carrying guns. As they rode up to the gate, which had a small rope over the picket to keep it closed, Jim Coles and the constable dismounted from their horses and came up to the gate. Mr. Stanford stood in the passage between our room and the kitchen, in plain sight, and his wife stood by his side. He asked what was wanted? Jim Coles said with an oath, "We want them Mormon Elders, and we are going to get them." Stanford said, "These Mormon Elders are my guests, and they are under my protection, and the first man that raises the latch on that gate is my meat." At this moment Mrs. Stanford said to the boys, "Boys, if you shoot, shoot to kill; do not shoot them in the legs, or anywhere that will not kill." Just then Jim Cole raised his hand to open the gate, Stanford cocked his gun and deliberately raised it to his shoulder, and took a deadly aim at Coles' heart. This was a critical moment, but Coles dropped his hand and stepped back, saying: "We will go back and get papers for all of you, for interfering with an officer in the discharge of his duty. When they left Mr. Stanford said, "Now, boys, we are in for it. They had the constable with them, and they will come back and arrest us all." Mr. Stanford proposed that we go to Okolona, the county seat, and put ourselves in the hands of the sheriff. The distance was about twenty miles. He said he and his boys would go with us and take their guns for our protection, in case the mob should follow us. We took one horse which Brinkerhoff and I rode in turns, while Stanford and the boys walked, arriving in Oklona late in the evening. We found the sheriff and explained the situation to him. He said we had better leave, as those were bad men and would not hesitate a minute to take our lives, if

they got us in their power. He said he would go with us and protect us through the mob district, that we would be safe as long as we were under his care, but he could not be with us all the time. He advised that we stay there that night and that he would go through the mob district with us in the morning. He took us to a hotel and provided for us for the night. Mr. Stanford sent the boys home and he stayed with us.

As soon as the stores were open in the morning, Mr. Stanford purchased a lot of ammunition, buck shot, powder, etc. The sheriff came early in the morning, and we all started back to Stanford's place. When we arrived there, Mrs. Stanford had a fine dinner prepared for us, and we all sat down to the table. Just after we had started to eat, the mob rode up to the gate again. The constable got down off his horse, came in and served the warrants for our arrests. The sheriff told him we would go with him as soon as we had our dinner. I noticed that the constable was somewhat taken back when he saw the sheriff; then he went out and, I suppose, told the others that the sheriff was there.

After dinner we started to go with them. Mr. Stanford pleaded with the sheriff to deputize him. But he would not do this, saying, "I can handle the situation all right." Mrs. Stanford pleaded with me not to go with them, saying, "If you stay with us, we can protect you, but if you go with those blood-thirsty men, they will take your life." I said, "Mrs. Stanford, if we remain in your house these men would shoot into the house and perhaps kill some of your children." She answered, with the tears streaming down her cheeks, "Brother Baxter, I would rather they would kill one of my children than they should kill you." We then left with the constable, the sheriff, Mr. Stanford, his two boys and the mob.

They had arranged for our trial at Shilo Church, a lonely place in the woods, about five miles from Stanford's house. Arriving there, we found about thirty more men, who had two wagons and a lot of whiskey, and nearly all of them under the influence of liquor. It looked very serious for us. Mr. Stanford was very much affected and again plead with the sheriff to deputize him, but with no avail. Our friends, Stanford and the sheriff, demanded that we have a speedy trial. The mob said there were two or three witnesses who lived twelve or fifteen miles away, and they could not get there until morning. Mr. Stanford said to the sheriff: "If you leave these men in the hands of this mob until morning, there will be no need for a trial, and you will be responsible for their murders." The sheriff then called the crowd together and took them a distance from us and tried to effect a compromise. He came to us and said they would let us go, if we would leave and promise never to return. I told him that we would go, but we could not promise never to return, that we had many friends here and that we were American citizens, and thought that we had the right to visit our friends. Mr. Stanford and the sheriff both advised us to go, and the sheriff reported to the mob just what I had said. They said they would take care of that part of it. The sheriff, Mr. Stanford and his boys accompanied us until we got across the county line, where we bid farewell to our friends. Mr. Stanford, as brave a man as ever lived, and who had been a soldier and captain during the Civil War, and had never surrendered, sat down by my side, took both my hands in his, and with the tears streaming down his cheeks bade me good-bye. He sat where he was and watched us as far as he could see us, and that was the last we ever saw of him or his family.

CHAPTER XIV

ELDERS WHIPPED BY THE MOB

Soon after our mobbing experience at Colesville, Elders Joseph S. Allen and Seth H. Thomas, who were laboring at Liberty Hill, came down to see us. Elder Thomas was not feeling well, and I had been appointed to go to Horn Lake, about ten miles from Memphis, Tenn., to visit some saints and baptize some children. It was thought best that Elder Thomas should go with me, as the change might help him. The distance to Horn Lake was about two hundred miles. We expected to take our time and make friends along the road, and preach, if we got an opportunity. About half way to Memphis, there were two families of saints, namely James Bevel and James McNorwood, and their families. We stopped with them a week or ten days, and then proceeded on our way to Horn Lake. After visiting the saints there and baptizing the children mentioned, we started on our return. We held a few meetings, but got no encouragement to stay anywhere on the road, so we returned to Randolph, Miss., where we met Elders Lee, Allen and Brinkerhoff. They were quite excited and told us the following story:

During our absence, Elder Lee joined Elders Allen and Brinkerhoff at Randolph. After we had left for Horn Lake, Elders Allen and Brinkerhoff thought they could slip into Mr. Stanford's place in the night and get our books and satchels, which we had left there when we were mobbed, and slip out again in the night and not be seen.

They went to the Stanford home and got the books, etc., but when coming away, they were surprised and captured by mobbers, who took them out into the woods where

they were stripped of their clothing and laid across a log and whipped with hickory switches, until the blood ran down their legs. Then they were warned that if they did not leave at once, they would be hanged. The Elders walked in this condition to Marshall Berry's place and remained there a few days. Then Elders Lee and Allen went to Randolph, leaving Elder Brinkerhoff at Berry's alone. The mob learning that he was there gathered their forces and surrounded the house at 10 o'clock at night and tried to enter the house. The family were in bed. Brother Berry got out of bed and went out on to the porch in his night clothes. He found it was the mob and forbade them to come in, but they persisted. He then got his shot gun and fired upon them without effect. They returned the fire, firing seventeen shots into the house, two of which took effect in Brother Berry's back, putting sixty-two shot into his body. Then they retired to the woods and re-loaded, but did not return. As soon as possible, Elder Brinkerhoff left the house and sought safety in the woods, where he laid two days and two night without food or shelter. He finally made his way to Randolph, where he met Elders Lee and Allen at the home of Mrs. Waldrop. They had remained there a few days, when the mob learned of their whereabouts, and, after recruiting their forces, came in search of them. The Elders being warned of the approach of the mob, went to Dale, twelve miles north, and escaped the mob.

These Elders who expected that Elder Thomas and I would return any day, knew that we were not acquainted with the conditions, but were in danger of being taken by the mob, went back to Mrs. Waldrop's and laid out in the woods until our arrival. After listening to this report of the mob's activity, we held a council meeting and decided to leave the county. We procured some bedding from Aunt

Becky Waldrop and went out into the cane brake and laid there until morning. It was with sad hearts that we parted, Elder Thomas and Allen to return to their old field of labor at Liberty Hill, Elder Lee to go to Choctow County, Alabama, and Brinkerhoff and I to the north in search of a new field of labor and friends. We left poor old Aunt Becky Waldrop with tears in her eyes, realizing that she might never see us again in this life, which she never did. The next day after Marshall Berry was shot, the mob returned and forced him and his family to board the train and go to Utah. They went to Provo, Utah, where Brother Berry later died from the effects of his wounds.

After we were mobbed at Mr. Kimbrough's place, he had the parties that mobbed us arrested and tried in the district court. They were found guilty, and fined one dollar each. The Judge said: "If they were justified at all in the violation of the law, it would be in driving the "Mormons" out of the country."

Not long after this, Elders Thomas and Allen had to leave Liberty Hill, where they had converted several people who had applied for baptism. After the Elders had left one of the candidates for baptism at Liberty Hill learned where I was, and so he came to me and requested that I go with him in the night and baptize those people, which I did. This was on the 25th of December, 1889—Christmas Day. I went into the village under cover of darkness and met all who desired to be baptized. We went down to the river and at midnight I baptized six persons. Among them was an old preacher by the name of Parson Pollock. Many years before, he had met a "Mormon" Elder and had been given a Voice of Warning, which converted him to "Mormonism." He kept the book concealed in his trunk, but for many years had based his sermons upon the teachings contained in

said book. After being baptized, he stood on the bank of the river in his wet clothes and sang a song and praised the Lord that he had had the privilege of entering into the true Church. After this I was escorted out of the neighborhood by a friend and never saw any of these people again, although they all emigrated to Utah later.

While traveling through Tishomingo County, Miss., we came to a large white house that was unoccupied. We found the owner of the house and got his permission to hold a meeting there; a large and attentive congregation attended, but after the meeting, no one seemed inclined to take us home. When the people were nearly all gone, a man stepped up to us, who after introducing himself, entered into conversation concerning Utah and her people. He invited us to his home, saying that he had some bread and bacon, and that we were welcome to share it with him as long as we desired to stay. We promised to call upon him in a day or two, took his name and the directions to his home. On speaking to our friends concerning him, we learned that there had been a family feud between his family and another for many years, and that five people in the two families had been killed, he having killed the last one about a year previous, and had evaded the officers since that time.

On learning this, we did not expect to convert him to the Gospel, but as we had promised to visit him, we thought we would do so, and started out to find his house. When we got near his home, as we thought, we made inquiries and were directed to his house. He invited us in and seemed very courteous. We had conversed with him in his sitting room for about a half hour, when a man, all out of breath and perspiring freely, came rushing in carrying a double-barrelled shotgun. He called our friend out and after a brief conversation together, they came in and this man

was introduced to us as a brother to our host. He then explained to us that a neighbor had sent him word that two strange men, whom they thought were officers of the law, were inquiring about his brother's home, and he thought they had come to arrest his brother, so he came in all haste to the defense of that brother. They then told us the story of the feud, and said this man, our host, had been hunted by the officers, and was compelled to hide in the woods and have his food taken to him while the officers were on his trail. He carried a gun in his hip pocket, which was very much worn by carrying the weapon. He was very nervous and would start at the least noise. In our conversation during the evening, we found that it was not the Gospel that he was interested in, but the conditions in Utah, as a good place for a refugee from justice. That night he put us in a room across the hall from the room in which he slept. After we had gone to bed, he came into our room and cautioned us to be very careful if we had occasion to go out in the night, to call him and let him know as he came nearly shooting his daughter who got up in her sleep, and he had his gun drawn on her and was about to shoot, when he discovered that it was his own daughter. So we laid very quiet all night, and did not get up until he had arisen in the morning. After breakfast we bade him goodbye and we never saw him again.

While at Horn Lake, visiting a family of saints, one of the children was sick, and we administered to it. There was a negro mammy there at the time, and after we had administered to the child, she begged us to give her a little oil. We explained to her the ordinance of healing, and said the virtue was not in the oil, but in the power of the Priesthood, and that it was the Lord who healed the sick. She said she knew that there was healing power in

the oil for she had got a little oil from some "Mormon" Elders years before. She further explained that a girl had been bitten by a snake, and that she had put a little bit of oil on the bite and the girl was not harmed. She had applied it on wounds, bruises, etc., until it was all gone, and in every case where she had used it, the patient was healed, and we could not tell *her* that the oil did not heal the sick. So we gave her a little consecrated oil and decided that her faith had been acknowledge in the administration of the oil.

While in the Stanford neighborhood, I had a very remarkable experience with evil spirits. A spiritualist by the name of Dr. Ivie, a wealthy man, had a large plantation, cotton gin, and mill, and employed a lot of men. We were informed that when he had the opportunity, he would invite ministers from different denominations to his home, and gather all the people he could get together, and discuss religion with the ministers, and very often defeat them, and hold them up in ridicule before the people. Our friends warned us against him, saying, that if he had the chance, he would browbeat and humiliate us before the people. He invited us to his home, I suppose, to have a little more fun with the preachers. We were a little timid about meeting him on account of the reports that we had heard, so we selected a day when it had been raining hard all day and went to his home in the evening, with the thought that he would not be able to gather a crowd. When we arrived at his home, there was only a few of his employees there; he gave us our supper and then we retired to a large room in the house. He immediately began to ply us with questions regarding our religion. Beginning his tirade he used the same arguments that he had done with other preachers. He started with the general conception of Deity, and quoted scripture to prove the personality of God, using the same

scriptural quotations that we used. He then proved to us that immersion was the proper mode of baptism, and that baptism was essential to salvation. He ridiculed the idea of sprinkling or pouring and calling it baptism, using several scriptural quotations by which he had confounded other preachers. We listened to him, until he had run dry and had no more material; then we preached the Gospel to him until about 10 o'clock, when he became enraged, jumped up and pointing to our bed, said, "There is your bed," and bolted out of the room. We went to bed but did not sleep. Shortly after retiring, an influence took possession of me, which seemed to threaten my destruction, for I felt as if some one was choking me. I tried to wake my companion, but I could not move or speak. I tried to pray, but I could not even think of a prayer. When I had suffered this way for some time, it left me all at once, and a sweet calm influence came over me. I soon fell asleep and slept peacefully until morning.

In the morning we got up and dressed, and had to pass through the dining room where the family and employees were at breakfast. I said "Good morning," but no one spoke. We then took our satchels which we had left in the dining room and walked out without a word being spoken. Soon after leaving the house, my companion asked me if I had any unusual experience during the night, and related his experience with the evil spirits in the after part of the night, just as I had had them. They took possession of him after they had left me. We never visited Dr. Ivie again, nor did we have any desire to renew the acquaintance.

CHAPTER XV

MAKING NEW FRIENDS

On leaving Pontotoc County, Elder Brinkerhoff and I went to the northern part of Mississippi in search of a new field of labor. After traveling about two weeks without success, we passed a farm house one day where we saw an elderly man sitting on the porch. We went to the gate and asked for a drink of water. He invited us in, gave us a drink and told us to rest awhile. This man was Terrill Harris, who said he had relatives in Utah by the name of McRae; stating also that many years ago he had entertained the Elders and was impressed with their teachings, but did not embrace the Gospel. He was very pleased to meet us and invited us to stay all night.

We had a very pleasant time with Uncle Terrill Harris, as he was called by the people there, and he became very much interested in us and invited us to make his house our home. This we did, going out from there to the surrounding country a week or so at a time, returning to him to remain a few days between each trip.

Elder Brinkerhoff's nerves were so shattered from his mobbing experience that after he had been out tracting a day or two he would return to the home of Mr. Harris. On several occasions, when we were traveling through the woods, if he heard a limb crack, he would jump like a frightened deer. He continued to get worse until he finally asked to be released to return home, which request was granted, and he received an honorable release. Before he left, we had made many friends in Tishomingo County, around Hillside, which was our post office.

After Elder Brinkerhoff left for home I made several long trips, especially to visit friends; also held a number of meetings and really had more friends than I could visit.

I baptized the wife, daughter and son-in-law of Uncle Terrill Harris and had many more converted, and besides a number of investigators. One evening I had a peculiar experience: A friend had invited me to visit him and stay all night. When I got to his house, I was surprised to find that he had invited three other ministers and a number of people to hear a friendly discussion of the Scriptures. We started out all right in a friendly discussion; but it was not long until the discussion became quite heated. Although the ministers were all of different faiths, and could not agree among themselves, they all three united against me. The discussion lasted until 2 o'clock in the morning, and if ever the Lord was with me, he surely was on that occasion. I quoted Scripture that I had never seen, and did not know was in the Bible. I think it was a very profitable evening, for those who were present were well satisfied with my defense.

Uncle Terrill Harris became a very sincere friend, and while he was not baptized I am sure he was converted. His wife told me, that when I was away and he was comfortably seated by the fireplace, he would say: "Now, if I had Baxter here with me to talk to me, my happiness would be complete." She also said that while I was away he was always looking for my return. On one occasion some men were talking of raising a mob to drive me out. He sent the mobbers word that they could come, but when they took Baxter out of his house, it would be over his dead body. They did not come. Uncle Terrill Harris was a very prominent man in the community and very influential among the people. The ministers of different churches tried to

get him to join their particular faith. He said that a minister of the Baptist Church once said to him, "Mr. Harris, you are a very influential man in this county, and if you would join our church, it would give our church great prestige." I said, "Uncle Harris, that might be true, but if you should join the 'Mormon' Church, and live in accordance with its principles and teachings, it would make you a better man, not that you would be an asset to the 'Mormon' Church, but the 'Mormon' Church would bring you to a higher standard of knowledge and understanding."

During this time I was alone, as my companion, Elder Brinkerhoff, had returned home, and it was some time later before another companion was sent to me. I did not attempt to hold many meetings, but visited with friends and occasionally went out into the country to try to interest some one in Gospel conversation. On one of these trips I had been out two or three days and had been very unsuccessful. I found the men were busy and some away from home, and we could not converse with the women in the absence of their husbands, because the ministers had warned them against us, telling them that our object was to convert women that would listen to us and take them to Utah as slaves; so we never tried to stop at the house of a stranger, if the husband was not at home. On this day I was wending my way back to my friends. It was a lovely day in early spring. The birds were singing in the trees and the flowers were in bloom all along the way. Walking along in deep meditation, I suddenly heard strains of music, and, looking up, I saw that I was approaching a farm house. When I came up even with the house, I saw a number of young folks around the organ playing and singing. It was Sunday and they were singing hymns. As I passed, the organist began to play "Home, Sweet Home," and all the young folks joined

in the song. I stood in the middle of the road and listened until the song was over, then proceeded on my way. This made me very homesick. Before leaving home, there was scarcely a Sunday that the young people did not gather at my house to surround the organ like this, and with my wife as organist we would sing the songs of Zion.

I continued on my way until I came to the post office at Hillside, where I got my mail—letters from home. The Hillside post office was kept by two old maids, very intelligent women, and were quite friendly, perhaps on account of our postage increasing their cancelations. They were not afraid of us at all, and I think, perhaps, they would like to be stolen and taken to Utah.

I then returned to the home of my old friend Harris and decided to stay there until my new companion would come. Some time later a missionary companion arrived: His name was Manwaring, a resident of Provo, Utah. He was a good singer and came loaded down with music books. Of course when he left home, he did not know what kind of a country he was coming to, or he never would have brought so many music books with him.

CHAPTER XVI

RELEASE AND RETURN HOME

After spending two years in the mission field, I received my release to return home with a company of saints and Elders that would leave Memphis about the 20th of March, 1890. My letter of release stated that I would have to raise \$50 to pay my fare home. I wrote my wife to that effect, and she immediately sent me the money. When I arrived at Memphis, I joined a company of three hundred saints and twenty Elders, in care of Pres. William Spry. We traveled in three cars, which were so crowded that not all of us could get seats and so I and a number of the other Elders had to stand, or get a seat wherever we could. One night, when we were nearing Denver, the people were very tired, and many of them had fallen asleep. Having nothing else to interest me, I thought I would play a practical joke on some of the Elders and take their watches. I told my companion what I intended to do, and he thought that it might create a little fun. I then saw Pres. Spry and asked him if it would be all right. He said, "Yes, go ahead, but you will have to be responsible." I started out, watched my chance, and if I caught an Elder asleep, I took his watch, until I got all of their watches. As each one awoke and felt for his watch he would go to Pres. Spry and tell him his watch had been taken. This continued until quite a crowd had surrounded Pres. Spry in one end of the car, and there was much excitement. Pres. Spry would sympathize with them and say, "There must be a sneak thief somewhere in the company, and we will have to have an

investigation." One man from Ogden, with tears in his eyes, said that his watch was a birthday gift from his wife, and he prized it very highly. Another said he saw a stranger go through the car at the last station, and he might have taken the watches. Another said, "I don't know how they got my watch, for I have not slept a wink." During this excitement, the conductor came along, and they told him all about it. He said, "If there is a thief here, he is of your own company, for there is no one else in this car." As the conductor was coming back, I told him it was all a joke and I had taken the watches. Then the tables began to be turned. Pres. Spry said, "Well, boys, this must be some of our own company and we will make an investigation, and when we find the thief, we will turn him over to the police, when we get to Denver." He said if there was anyone in this company that could take all of these watches, he must be an experienced pickpocket, and this is not his first offense. I then began to walk the floor, for I thought I had carried the joke too far, and it would react upon myself. I did not have the watches, however; I had given them to my companion as I had taken them, and he had put them in his hat, until he had nearly a hatful of watches, so he also began to get quite uneasy. Bro. Spry went around and investigated and found the watches in my companion's hat. Then, as a matter of course (so that my companion would not get into any trouble), Pres. Spry told them that it was all a joke, and that I had spoken to him about it, and had obtained his consent to do it just for a little fun. The Elders took the joke in good part, except the Ogden man who had the birthday watch; he never did forgive me. That escapade finished my practical joking.

I arrived in Evanston March 25, 1890. Bishop James Brown of Evanston Ward was the only person to see me

leave on my mission, and when I now returned he was the only person there to welcome me home. I went to his home, and that evening he invited me to attend a Priesthood meeting which was to be held at the chapel. At a previous meeting there had been a heated discussion upon a technical point of Scripture by two Scotchmen, and the argument was to be continued this evening, but to the great relief of Bishop Brown, they gave way to me and I addressed the meeting.

Next morning Alfred G. Rex, my wife's sister's husband, went with me and borrowed a horse and saddle to take me to my home at Randolph, Utah. It was a spring following a very hard winter, and the roads were in a very bad condition. The water was high and the bridge over Saleratus Creek, in the lane leading to Woodruff, was washed away, and the saleratus bottoms were a lake of water. Before reaching this lane, I met two men from Randolph traveling on horseback who found a ridge through the bottoms and a dam across the creek over which they had been able to cross; they went back over their tracks with me. The water running over the dam was quite deep and dangerous; and if I had not met these men I would no doubt have had great difficulty in crossing, and perhaps might have endangered the life of myself and horse.

Arriving at Woodruff, I called at the ranch of Anson C. Call. The Board of Directors of the Church School at Randolph, of which I was a member before leaving for my mission, were holding a meeting there. Sister Anson C. Call, who met me at the door, was very much pleased to see me, and ushered me in to the meeting. My Uncle, Archibald McKinnon, who was president of the Board, was speaking at the time. The members all expressed pleasure at seeing me, but did not make any demonstration

that would disturb the meeting. Uncle continued his remarks until he had finished, then sat down, and, to my surprise, did not pay any attention to me. After a few minutes, however, it dawned on him that I had been away. He said that when he saw me in the meeting he thought I was there as usual and did not realize that I had been gone two years. I then received an outburst of friendly greetings. Leaving the Call place, I rode in a wagon with my friends, leading my horse behind the conveyance, and arrived at my home in Randolph at midnight. When I got in sight of my house it was glowing with light from every window and was a most beautiful sight to me. My wife and my mother were sitting up, awaiting my arrival, and it was a happy meeting. While absent on this mission I walked 4,088 miles, rode on the train and other conveyances 4,593 miles, laid out in the woods 18 nights without food or shelter, and was in the hands of the mobs five different times. With the exception of \$9 given to me by the Sunday School officers and teachers and \$5 sent to me by George A. Peart, and a pair of socks by Sister Benzley, I did not receive any assistance while on my mission, or for transportation to or from my field of labor, only that which was sent by my wife. And on returning home I found that my wife with her little store, and by boarding some of the High School boys from Woodruff, had been able to support herself, my mother and Katie Hodges, a young lady who lived with her for company while I was away. When I arrived home, I found myself out of debt and everything at home in good shape.

This was very unusual. Not many L. D. S. missionaries, in returning home from missions, find conditions as favorable as I did; it was all due to the good management of my wife.

After returning home I took back my ranch, and had three horses that were colts when I left. I was again elected to the office of county clerk and everything looked very favorable for a new start. My wife expected to continue in the millinery business, and with my county office and little ranch we thought we would get along very nicely. I had just finished a new home before going on my mission, and the trees and lawn were looking beautiful. I had also built a new home for mother by the side of ours, so we were all very happy, and our future looked good.

CHAPTER XVII

CALLED TO BE A BISHOP

In August of the same year I was just finishing my haying, when the presidency of the Bear Lake Stake drove up to our home. I went out and invited them to come in and stay all night. They replied that they could not do this for they were going on to Woodruff and would like me to accompany them. I said I would go, but insisted that they come in to supper first, even if they did not remain all night, so they came in, saying, that they intended to stay all night, but wanted to see how welcome they would be.

I put up their team, and then we had supper when they began to speak of conditions at Woodruff. They said "The people there are not supporting Bishop William H. Lee, and the ward has all gone to pieces. There was strife and contention among the people, and they had decided to release Bishop Lee and put in a new Bishop. I then began to tremble with fear when they said, "You have been selected to be the successor to Bishop Lee."

I cannot describe my feelings, nor the feelings of my wife, in this narrative, because we were simply dumbfounded. I said to the brethren, "This is surely a surprise and a heavy blow to me, and I would like a little time to think about it." They said, "We will give you all night to think about it, and I could go to Woodruff with them in the morning."

I did think about it all night and decided to respond to the call, and in the morning I told them I would go.

My wife had always supported me before this time in everything, but this was too much. She said, "You go to Woodruff, if you want to, but I will not go with you." This was a great trial to my wife; she had her new home, and her little millinery store, and was very happy with her surroundings; but when I finally decided to respond to the call she was again willing to make the sacrifice. I then went to Woodruff with the brethren. Bishop Lee was released and I was installed as his successor. In the month of September, 1890, I was ordained a High Priest and Bishop and set apart to preside over the Woodruff Ward by Pres. William Budge of the Bear Lake Stake, he being authorized by the Presidency of the Church to ordain and install me in this position.

We thought of moving our stock of dry goods and millinery to Woodruff, but as a man by the name of Perry Sessions had just started a little store in Woodruff, and he being almost blind, we did not want to interfere with his business, so we decided to close out our stock in Randolph, which we did.

I appointed John Snowball as deputy county clerk and gave him all there was in the office. We then made preparations to move, and the 7th day of November, 1890, witnessed our removal from Randolph to Woodruff. Wesley K. Walton of Woodruff had a vacant house on a farm just south of the town and kindly offered it to us to live in until we could do better. It was a shack of a house, and was occupied by bed bugs, which were so numerous that they would fall from the ceiling to the floor, but we went to work, cleaned the premises, got rid of the pests and made the house fairly comfortable. While living there, my wife and I both took down with the Influenza, both being in bed at the same time; but the neighbors were very kind

and came to wait on us. After recovering, I was at a loss to know how to make a living. There was no opportunity for employment, and I just seemed to be up in the air. I was offered 160 acres of land, situated about a mile and a half south of Woodruff for my home at Randolph, by Anson C. Call. The home was worth \$2,000, and the land was worth \$900, but as I could not find any other buyer for my home I traded even. The land was alkali land and did not produce anything except fox-tail hay and pasturage, so I lost out on that deal. In March, 1891, my wife's sister, Mrs. Alfred G. Rex of Evanston, Wyoming, died, and her adopted daughter, Nellie, who was then nine years of age came to live with us. Nellie was two years old when she was adopted by Mrs. Rex and had been with us a good deal at various times, so that when she came to live with us, she felt quite at home. She was a very sweet little girl with a very loving disposition and became a great source of comfort to us.

Soon after moving to Woodruff I had a very remarkable dream which left a lasting impression upon my mind.

A prominent member of the ward died, and I spoke at his funeral. After the body had been placed in the grave and the grave had been dedicated, I stood for some time by the side of the grave, thinking upon the events of the day, and was much concerned about these matters. On my way home from the cemetery I continued to meditate upon these things, and also during the evening. When I retired that night these questions were still on my mind, I may have fallen asleep, or what I saw may have been a vision. At any rate I vividly lived again, through the events of the day. I again spoke at the funeral of my friend and again accompanied the cortege to the cemetery. I again stood by the side of the open grave pondering over the problems of life

and death. Looking across the grave towards the north, I noticed a large group of people approaching. They came on until they stood facing me on the opposite side of the grave with their arms hanging down by their sides. Their faces were familiar and I knew that I had seen them previously. I was glad and happy to see them and smiled at them in greeting and pleasure. I desired to shake hands with them and started around the head of the grave to do so, but they stood still and I could not reach them or touch them, so I started around the foot of the grave to greet them and shake hands with them, but I could not. I next tried to reach across the grave to them with the same result. I then heard a voice, speaking clearly and distinctly, saying, "You cannot go to them around the grave or yet across the grave, the only way you can go to them is through the grave." Some time later I was called to Randolph to speak at the funeral of Sister Vilate Muir, the sister of Pres. Heber J. Grant, who was then an Apostle. This was, as I remember, my first acquaintance with Pres. Grant. He and his brother Hyrum attended the funeral and Pres. Grant spoke at his sister's funeral. While he was speaking of the life of his beloved sister, great tears streamed down his cheeks and dropped on the floor. I was so deeply impressed at that time with the great soul of Pres. Grant that I have never forgotten the occasion. After the services, both brothers came to me and warmly thanked me for the good things I had said about their sister. I then formed an attachment for them that never left me. The Woodruff people received us with open arms, and gave me full support in my position as Bishop. They were a very kind and hospitable people and it was not long before Sister Baxter and myself were quite at home with them. Pres. Budge visited us soon after we moved, and Savannah C. Putman and Byron Ses-

sions were selected as my counselors. I had been at Woodruff two years before I earned a dollar. We had lived on what we had received from the millinery store and hay sold from the meadow at Randolph.

Shortly after moving to Woodruff a Presbyterian minister from Logan named Green, who was on a vacation and took a fishing trip on the Woodruff Creek, stayed with us about ten days; he was quite a genial fellow. While at our home he saw the children coming in quite often, with a dozen eggs, a pound or two of butter, a piece of pork, etc., etc., for tithing. One morning he said to me "Well, Bishop, I would rather have my salary of \$150 per month than all the tithing you get." He said more than he knew, for he thought that I received all the tithing that came in for my personal use. The fact is, I did not receive much for handling the tithing that came in at Woodruff. We had no way of caring for the butter and other perishable things that came in when we first went there. We sold what we could at the store, but there was no market for butter, therefore quite a lot of butter was turned in for tithing.

We got the use of an abandoned cellar from Savannah C. Putnam, which was over two blocks from where we lived, my wife cleaned it up and made it suitable to keep the butter. We then got some barrels from Evanston, and as the butter came in she worked it over and put it down in these barrels. We shipped 600 pounds of this butter to the Tithing Store House at Salt Lake City, and received word that it was the best lot of butter turned in to the Tithing Store House. Sister Baxter was an expert butter-maker, having made butter nearly all her life. She took the prize at the fairs in Utah and Wyoming for the best butter.

The tithing came in as produce, in small quantities, and

the Bishops had to dispose of the produce for money and remit the cash to the Presiding Bishop's Office. Very little cash was paid for tithing in those days. We received cattle, hay, grain and all kinds of produce. There was an arrangement in the Bear Lake Stake at that time to the effect that the stake clerk, John U. Stucki, should visit each ward in the stake, and assist the Bishops in settling tithing with the people, and at the close of the year, the Bishops had to go to Paris, Idaho, to settle with the stake clerk, and the clerk was remunerated for this labor out of the Bishops' allowance for handling the tithes which I think was 10 per cent of the tithes received. One year when I went to Paris to settle tithes with the clerk, Bishop Joseph Kimball of Meadowville and I went together. He lived about 35 miles from Paris, while I lived sixty miles away. We had to go by team which, occupied several days in my case. While Bishop Kimball was settling with Bro. Stucki, I heard him say: "Now, Brother Stucki, remember my salary." This I heard him repeat several times, and Brother Stucki would say, "Yes, Bishop, I shall remember that." At the close of the settlement he said, "Bishop Kimball, the balance of your salary is \$3.20. Mine was better, I received a balance of \$8.00, but I handled much more tithing than did Bishop Kimball. Such was the stupendous salary of a "Mormon" Bishop, as compared with the salary of the Reverend Mr. Green of the Presbyterian Church, of Logan, Utah, with his \$150 per month.

At the county election in 1902 many of my political friends wanted me to run for assessor, but I was a Republican and the Democrats were so much in the majority that I could not see any possible chance of being elected, so I declined to run. But one day the leader of the Democratic

Party, came to me confidentially and said that he realized that I had made a great sacrifice in coming to Woodruff, and thought I needed the position; and if I would run, he would do all in his power for me, and he was satisfied that I would be elected. It was very true that I needed the position for I was at bedrock financially, so I thought that if he would turn all the votes he could my way, I might stand a chance, and I accepted the nomination. They put up against me a bachelor that had no interest in public affairs and I thought surely I could beat him. Before election some of his party got wind that the leader was favoring me, and so they whipped him into line and he did all in his power to defeat me. When the votes were counted, I was defeated by one vote. This disgusted me with politics and I never had anything to do with them since, only to cast my vote.

Pres. Budge again paid us a visit and counselled me to get a lot near the middle of the townsite and build a good home, and encourage the people to move in and build up the town. Up to that time many of the people, including the former Bishop, were living on their farms.

At this time I received a letter from the Blyth & Fargo Co., of Evanston, Wyo., making me a proposition to take over their store at Almy, Wyo., either on a percentage of the sales or they would sell the store and the stock to me, and let me pay for it when I could. Of course I could not accept this proposition, but I thought it was very nice of Blyth & Fargo to make it, and I appreciated the confidence they placed in me. In harmony with the council of Pres. Budge I procured a vacant lot in the center of the townsite. It was covered with sage brush, but I cleaned it up, fenced it and started to build a home. I did not have any money, but I did possess a lot of faith and energy. I went into the moun-

tains and hauled logs to the saw mill, where I had them sawed into lumber, and paid for the sawing with logs. I also had the lath sawed in the same way, and in this manner I got more lumber than was required to build my house. I then interested a number of men who wanted to build in getting a brick machine to make brick. Joseph H. Neville got the brick machine and made arrangements with those



OUR WOODRUFF HOME

that wished to build to make their brick. I arranged with him to make my brick and lay them up, and in payment I hauled wood out of the mountains to burn the brick, for all the brick buildings that had been agreed upon to be built in Woodruff. William John Smith, my brother-in-law, was a good carpenter, living at Ogden, and as he was out of employment,

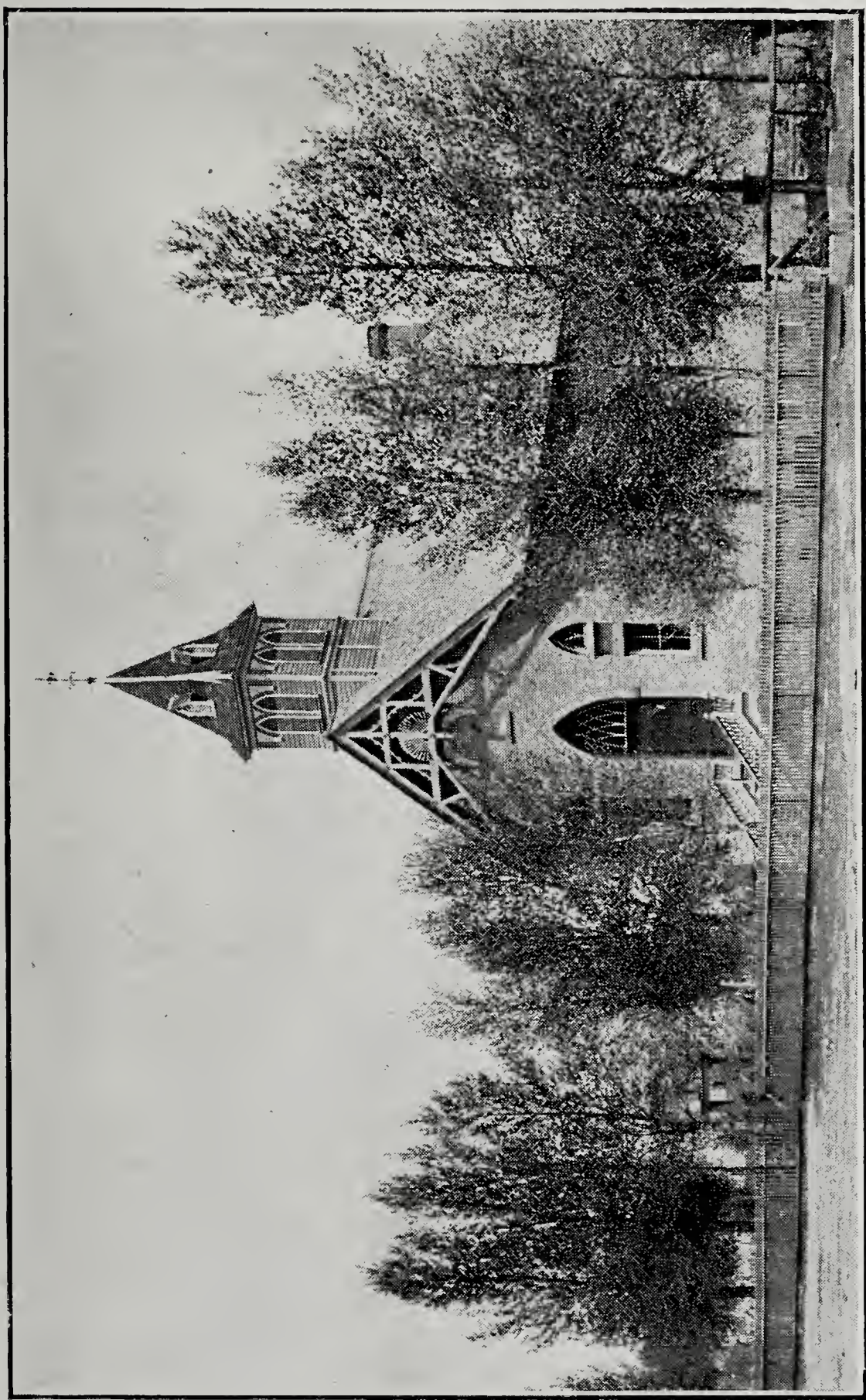
I proposed to move him to Woodruff, if he would do the carpenter work on my house. I let him have lumber and hauled enough logs out of the mountains for him to build a house for himself, and took my pay in carpenter work on my own house, and he did a wonderful job for me. The men of the ward had a "bee" and hauled all the rock for the foundation and basement in one day. Joseph H. Neville built a lime kiln up the Woodruff canyon and I hauled the material to burn the lime, in payment for the lime used in my house. Savannah C. Putman had an old shingle mill which had been abandoned. We fixed it up and got an old threshing machine horse power and attached it to the shingle mill. I hauled the shingle timber from the mountains and we cut the shingles for the house. Not having any money to buy doors, windows, nails, etc., I went to Evanston and borrowed \$200 from the Odd-Fellow's Lodge. Mr. Thomas Blyth of the Blyth & Fargo Co. of Evanston, proposed to buy my doors, windows and hardware and let me have them at cost. I also got out the material for a house for Alfred Newton to pay him for tending masons in the building of my house. I employed the Durnford Bros., first class plasterers of Evanston, to do the plastering. After I finished the house I set out a row of trees around it, built a nice picket fence and made a lawn and garden. In this way I carried out the counsel given me by Pres. Budge. The house was first class in every way, one and one-half story, with nine large rooms and a basement and porch. It took me four years to build it in this way, but now we had a better home than we had ever had before. The people were encouraged to follow my example and a number of substantial brick homes were built. At the same time we built a brick meeting house and a large brick school house, both of which today would be a credit to any community.

Directly after finishing the building of the house, I sold my meadow at Randolph and built a frame building near my house for a store. Blyth & Fargo of Evanston, proposed to stock it for me, and let me pay for the stock when I could. In this way I started in the store business again.

CHAPTER XVIII

UNITED EFFORT BRINGS SUCCESS

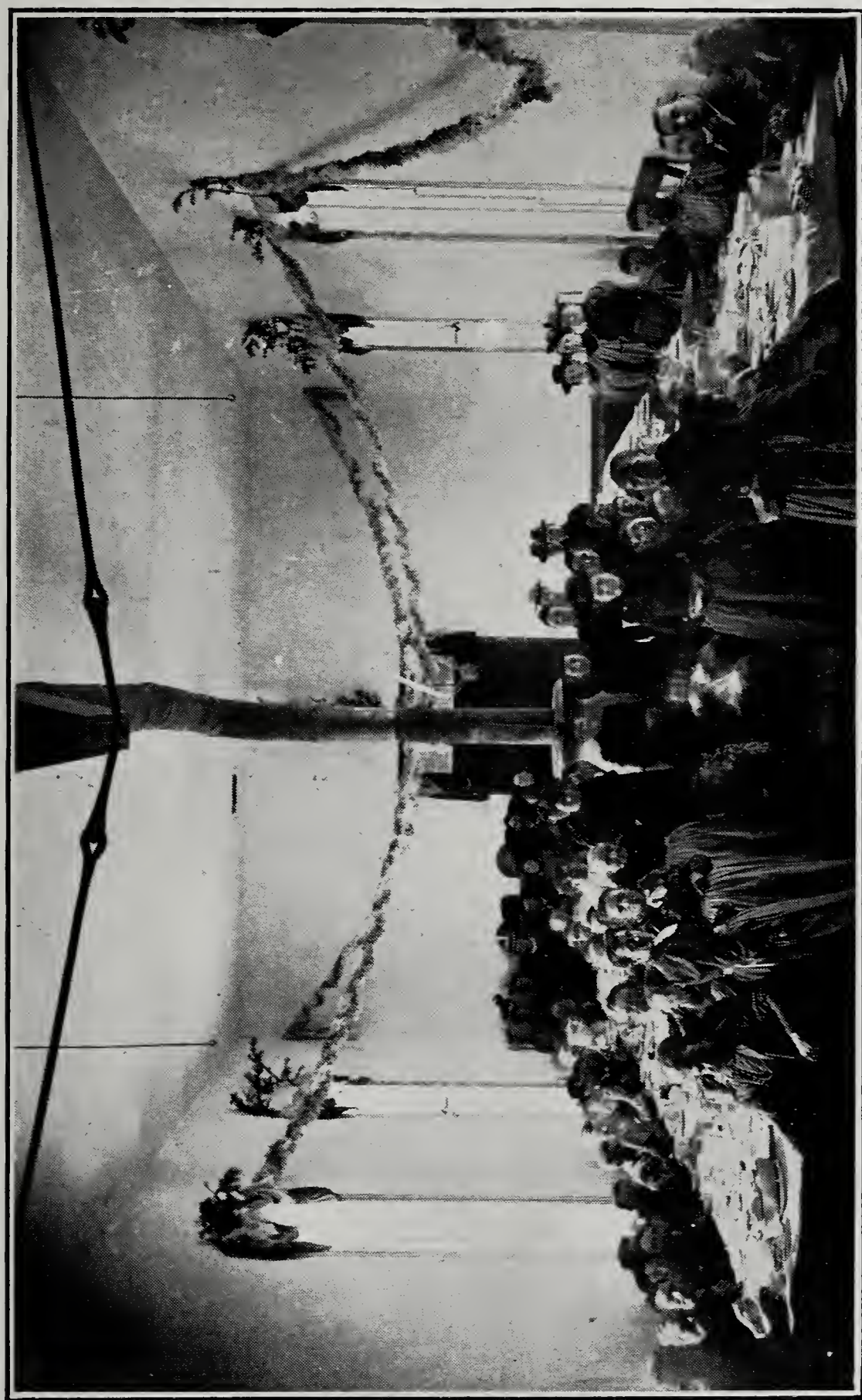
The people of the Woodruff Ward became very much united and supported me in every way as their Bishop. Our meetings were well attended. The Priesthood was very active, and everyone was prosperous. When we put the shingles on our new meeting house, there was not a man in Woodruff who was not on the job. Some men—not members of the Church—came with their tools and assisted with the work. The ladies served a public dinner in the old church, and the children cleaned the grounds around the new meeting house. Hence, it can truthfully be said that all the men, women and children in the ward were on the job. This would give an idea of the splendid feeling of love and harmony existing among the people at Woodruff at that time. This feeling was not confined to the Woodruff Ward alone, for my Uncle Archibald McKinnon was Bishop of the Randolph Ward at the time and the attachment existing between him and myself was so pronounced that a general love and affection grew up between the saints in the two wards. We joined in our social affairs and visited back and forth. Especially was this the case on Thanksgiving Day, for a number of years. The wards would serve Thanksgiving dinner to each other alternately. The ward which was guest would go in procession from one ward to the other, a distance of ten miles and was often led by a brass band. A great deal of time was spent in preparation for these annual events. I have often spent a week or more preparing for these festivals. On one occasion the people of Woodruff built an



WOODRUFF WARD CHAPEL

arch across the road with the words "WELCOME," and when the Randolph people were within two or three miles of Woodruff, the people of that town, formed in procession and went out to the arch to meet them. They were headed by the Walton brass band escorting the Randolph people from there to the meeting house, where tables had been set to accommodate all the people, loaded with the best of food, including roast turkey and pumpkin pie. So this had a tendency to unite the people of the two wards, and young and old mingled together in love and harmony.

The Woodruff people were very much handicapped in not having sufficient water for irrigation. The streams were high in the spring, when the snows were melting, but ran off so early, that in the latter part of the season water was very scarce. We went up the creek and its tributaries several times, to try to locate a site for a reservoir. The canyons are so steep and narrow that it was difficult to find a suitable place, but we finally found a place about nine miles up the right hand fork, that would do for a small reservoir. We started to build one and called it the Lone Pine Reservoir. I went to Salt Lake City and negotiated for some pipe that had been taken up from the water mains, and a valve, which I purchased at a reduced price. We laid this pipe at the bottom of the stream with the valve at the lower end of the pipe. The formation was a shale mountain on one side of the dam and a clay formation on the other, so we scraped in equal amounts from each side and kept it well sprinkled with water. The horses travelling over this made it like solid cement so there was no possible chance of it washing out. About fifteen men worked on this job for about six weeks. I had two hired men besides myself. My wife was there all the time and helped to cook for the men and make



DINNER SERVED BY THE SISTERS AT WOODRUFF, AFTER CLEANING UP THE CHURCH GROUNDS ON THE
COMPLETION OF THE WARD CHAPEL IN 1899.

them comfortable. This improved the water situation, but it did not hold enough water. We then tried to get water from Bear River, going to the narrows of the river, about four miles east of Woodruff, and made several surveys, but could not get around the Saleratus Creek Bottoms which were much lower than Woodruff, and we had to give that project up. Hence, Woodruff is still short of water.

Thus I worked for eight years with the people of the Woodruff ward as their Bishop and my wife and I learned to love the people. We were prospered financially and were very grateful that we had been called there, and can truthfully say that some of the happiest days of our lives were spent at Woodruff.

CHAPTER XIX

ORGANIZATION OF WOODRUFF STAKE

On the 6th day of June, 1898, the Woodruff Stake was organized. At a conference held at Almy, Wyoming, for this purpose, it was decided to take part of the Bear Lake Stake and part of the Summit Stake to form a new Stake—to take from the Bear Lake Stake the wards of Randolph, Argyle and Woodruff, and from the Summit Stake, Almy, Evanston and Rock Springs. There were present at this conference of the Twelve Apostles: John Henry Smith, Heber J. Grant, Mathias F. Cowley and Abraham O. Woodruff. Pres. Wm. Budge of the Bear Lake Stake, Alma Eldredge of the Summit Stake presidency, and the following Bishops of Wards: Archibald McKinnon of Randolph, John Kennedy of Argyle, John M. Baxter of Woodruff, James Bowns of Almy, and James Brown of Evanston. The Rock Springs Ward was not represented. Several names were brought up and discussed by the Apostles and stake presidents, as suitable persons for president of the new stake. I was called into the council and Apostle John Henry Smith, who was in charge, questioned me 'regarding' my habits, etc., I am sure that I did not make a very favorable impression upon him, as he dismissed me rather abruptly. I drew a sigh of relief, as I did not want to be taken from my little ward. I noticed in this meeting that Brother Grant favored me, but I think that he was the only one. The brethren held two or three other council meetings and later I was called before them again, sized up, and dismissed again. I noticed this time quite a heated discussion between John Henry

Smith and Brother Grant and overhead Grant say, "Well, let us call the Bishops together, and if a majority of the Bishops do not vote for my man, then I will give up." Of course I did not know that I was Brother Grant's man, but I thought I was. They called the Bishops together, and I received the votes from all but one and that was myself. I was then declared the choice of the council as the president of the new stake. The stake was then named the Woodruff Stake, in honor of Pres. Wilford Woodruff, who was then the President of the Church. I had heard Pres. Grant say that it was through an impression of his that I was made the president of the Woodruff Stake, but as I did not know the details of the matter, I wrote to him concerning it and received the following reply:

"Dear Brother Baxter, Evanston Wyoming. On my return from a short trip to Phoenix, Arizona, and Los Angeles, California I found your letter of April 20, 1932. At the time of the organization of the Woodruff Stake we did not hold conferences on Fast Day. Brother John Henry Smith was appointed (with Brothers Mathias F. Cowley and A. Owen Woodruff) to go and organize the stake. I had no appointment for that date and asked John Henry, if he was acquainted with John M. Baxter of the Woodruff Ward, and he said 'No.' The 'Impression' came to me that if I volunteered to accompany Bro. Smith and his companions, you would be made president of the stake, and if I did not volunteer, as Bro. Smith did not know you, some other man would be chosen. As I recall it, I asked Pres. Woodruff's permission to accompany Bro. Smith and his companions. When we reached Almy, we discussed the question of 'Who would be the president of the stake,' and while we were doing so, we saw, coming in a white-topped wagon Bishop Wilford Woodruff Clark of

Montpelier with Pres. William Budge and his counselor, Brother Hart, father of Charles H. Hart. John Henry said, 'There is the president of the new stake, Wilford Woodruff Clark,' and he asked his companions to approve of Brother Clark, which we did by vote, as I recall it. When the matter was presented to Pres. Budge, he protested saying, 'That Clark and Baxter were both Bishops in his stake, and that Baxter would make as good a stake president as Clark, and why take a man away from Bear Lake Stake who had a ranch there of three hundred and twenty acres and who was making a fine record as the Bishop of the Montpelier Ward, standing high with the non-Mormons as well as with the 'Mormons,' and, as I recall it, Montpelier had more non-'Mormons' then than they had 'Mormons' located there. Bro. Smith did not seem favorably impressed with you for stake president.' Pres. Budge then said, 'that he could give us just as good a man as either of these Bishops,' and he mentioned Brother Byron Sessions. We met Bro. Sessions and Bro. John Henry chatted pleasantly with him about business affairs, etc., and then said, 'That is the man.' We called a Priesthood meeting to present the name of the president of the new stake. Brother Almy Eldredge was there, as I remember it, representing the Summit Stake, as part of the wards to be included in the Woodruff Stake at the time of its organization belonged to the Bear Lake Stake and part to the Summit Stake. I believe Bro. James Brown of Evanston was also in attendance at the meetings. After the brethren had assembled in this meeting, I remarked to Bro. John Henry, that I did not know Brother Sessions, neither did he, and suggested that we call the Bishops together (I have forgotten how many there were, but I believe it was ten) and I give each a slip of paper and let them write the name of the one they would like to have for their president, and we

might change our minds. Brother Smith said he was willing to do this. After distributing the papers I said, 'Brother Baxter won't vote for himself and perhaps one of the men from Summit Stake will not vote for him, but if he gets all the votes excepting two, will you nominate him for president? I feel impressed that he will get these votes.' As I recall it, you got all the votes but two. I think you voted for the Bishop of Randolph Ward and the Bishop of Kemmerer I believe voted for a brother from Evanston, a Bro. Kingston or some such name. I had, as stated above, a very strong impression that you were entitled to, and should be made the president of the proposed Woodruff Stake of Zion, and, acting upon that impression, was the reason why I asked permission to be present at the organization of the stake. I trust this is the information you want, and it is a pleasure to me to give it to you. As you were on the ground and undoubtedly made some notes, perhaps you will find I have made some slight mistakes regarding what happened, but I am positive that my 'Impression' was the one thing that caused you to be made president of the stake. With all good wishes and assurances of highest regard and esteem, I am,

Sincerely Your Brother,

Heber J. Grant."

The officers of the Woodruff Stake were then selected, sustained and set apart as follows:

John M. Baxter, president; Byron Sessions, first counselor, and Charles Kingston, second counselor; Thomas J. Tingey, stake clerk.

William H. Lee, William J. Cox, Anson C. Call, William S. Muir, Joseph Dean (Almy), Samuel Bryson, Jedediah M. Grant, Savannah C. Putnam, Daniel C. Corina, Joseph B. Martin, Perry G. Sessions, Isaac Dawson, members of the High Council.

Daniel Gerrard, Andrew Kennedy, Andrew Easton, Ben. R. Brough and William Buck ,alternate members of the High Council.

William H. Lee, William S. Muir and Savannah C. Putnam, presidency of the High Priests' Quorum.

William H. Lee and William B. Burton, Patriarchs.

Presidency of the Relief Society: Lucy F. Grant, Katie Snowball, Alice Jackson; Agnes T. Call, secretary.

Y. M. M. I. A.: Malcolm McKinnon, Samuel R. South, Charles J. Call; Wylie Nebeker, secretary.

Y. L. M. I. A.: Alice Burton, Minnie M. Bounds, Catherine Whittle; Lillie Bell, secretary; Tiena Cox, treasurer.

Sunday School: William Beverage, George Easton, Frank Mills; Chas. Beverage, secretary; Lillie Bell, treasurer.

Primary Association: Ida Beverage, Livinia Dean, Laura Burdette; Mary Beverage, secretary.

Religion Class: John A. Guild.

The day after the organization of the stake, June 7, 1898, I, in company with Apostles John Henry Smith, Heber J. Grant and A. Owen Woodruff, and Byron Sessions, went to Fort Bridger and organized the Owen Ward, with Samuel R. Brough, as Bishop; Ephraim Marshall as first and Carl G. Youngberg, as second counselors. While waiting for the train at Evanston, the Catholic priest of this district joined us and enquired of John Henry Smith with whom he was acquainted what all these Church officials of the "Mormon" Church were doing here. Brother Smith answered, calling the priest by name! "We have just organized a new stake of Zion, and," (introducing me as president of the stake) "this is our big chief. And we are going to Mormonize this town of Evanston." It did not appear that way then,

as the Mormon population at Evanston was just a little over 200 souls, but at this writing (1932) there are about 1500 members of the L. D. S. Church residing in Evanston.

On June 9, 1898, Apostle Heber J. Grant, Byron Sessions and I re-organized the Woodruff Ward, with Peter McKinnon of Randolph as Bishop, and on July 17, 1898, Byron Sessions and I organized the Hilliard Branch.

Soon after the organization of the stake, we received a letter from Apostle John Henry Smith stating that at a meeting of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, it was decided that Evanston, Wyo., should be the headquarters of the Woodruff Stake and advised that Brother Sessions and myself make arrangements to move up there as soon as convenient. We went to Salt Lake City and had an interview with Pres. Woodruff, when he informed us that he was not present at the meeting where it was decided that we should move to Evanston, and he did not favor it. We returned home and the next day received a letter, stating that the matter of our moving to Evanston had been re-considered and that we were to stay at Woodruff, which would be the headquarters of the stake for the present at least.

In the early spring of 1899 John Neilson came to us. He had moved to Woodruff in November, 1898, by invitation of Bishop Peter McKinnon to take care of the Woodruff Ward Choir. He had arrived from Scotland the year before from the city of Glasgow, where he had had experience in directing the singing of L. D. S. choirs, and he took a general interest in the activities of the ward. He entered my employ in the spring of 1899 and remained with us for a number of years.

In August, 1899, Apostle Abraham O. Woodruff and Joseph W. McMurrin, of the Seventies, made a trip up into

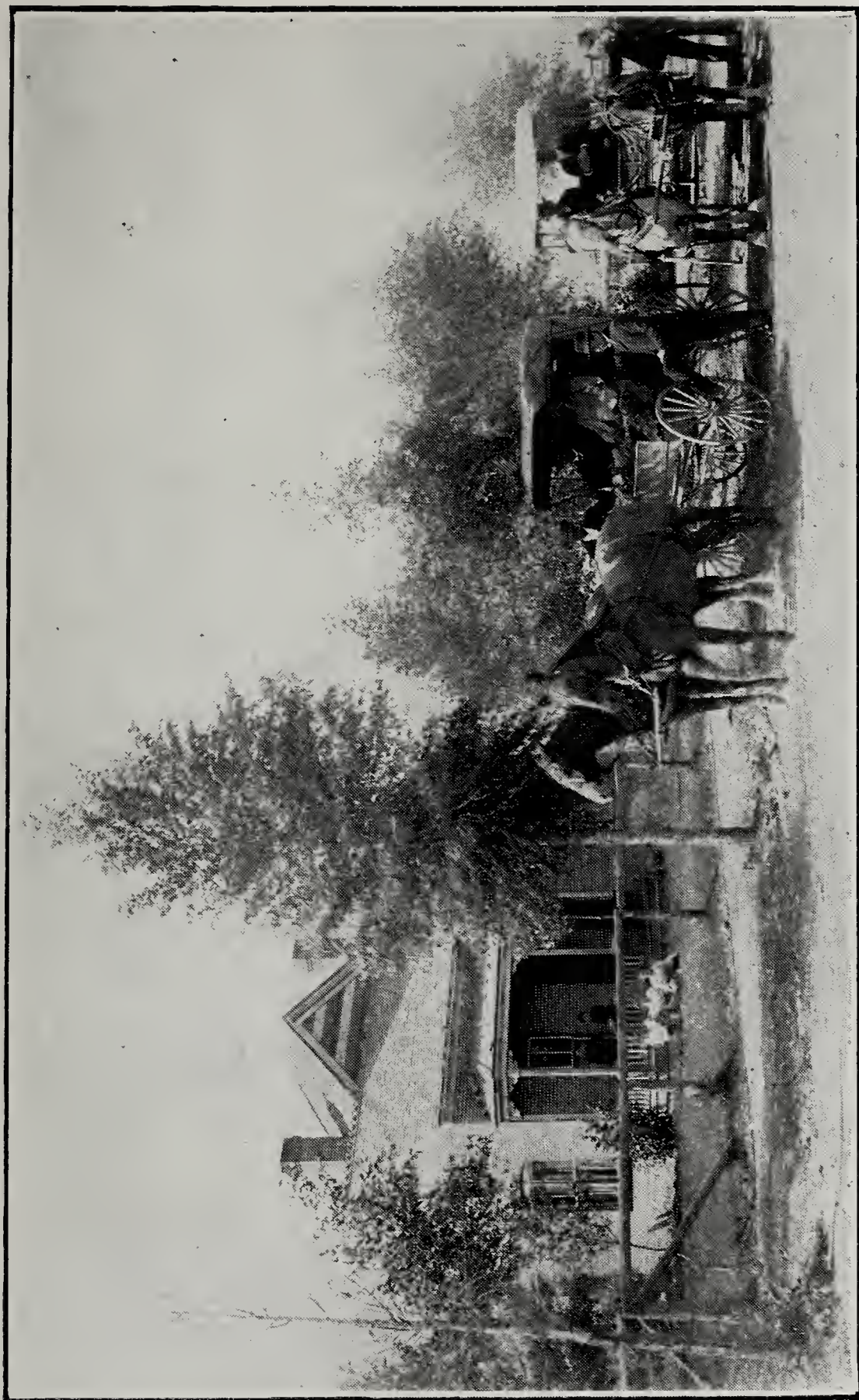
the Big Horn country in the northeast part of Wyoming, where they organized a branch of the Church at Burlington on the Gray Bull River. After travelling through that country, they came through the Woodruff Stake and desired Pres. Sessions and me to go with them down to Henry's Fork of Green River, where some of our people had located. The brethren thought that a branch of the Church might be organized there. Meeting these brethren at Fort Bridger, we started for Henry's Fork. The first day we passed through the "Bad Lands" of Wyoming, and they were "*Bad Lands*" indeed. Not a vestage of verdure could be seen, nor a bird or any animal life for twenty miles through the hills. It created within me a very solemn feeling as though I was passing through a cemetery—a feeling of depression and loneliness. When we came to Henry's Fork we witnessed the other extreme, for here was a most beautiful valley, lovely meadows, and pine trees growing profusely all around and through the meadows; also birch, cottonwood, quaking asp and cedar; all these interspersed with and among the pines. Their colors all blended together in the sunlight; and streams of water, clear as crystal, flowing through the meadows, made one of the most beautiful pictures of nature that I had ever seen. .

We camped in an open field at Lone Tree. This settlement consisted of a small store and a school house. There were other houses close around, but they were hidden by the pine trees and foliage. While camped for breakfast, Brother Woodruff produced a piece of dry beef. After laying it upon a quilt that we used for a table cloth, he said, "Brethren, eat some of that dried beef, I know it is good, for it has been blessed three times a day since we left Salt Lake City, three weeks ago." I remarked "I am afraid that it

has been blessed too much to be palatable." After driving up to the Lone Tree Store, Pres. McMurrin was surprised to meet a missionary companion, Elder Wm. Langton, who had recently returned from London, England. After warmly embracing Bro. McMurrin, he said, "Brother McMurrin the last time I saw you was in London with its millions of people, but, oh, this is so different from London." To appreciate this little story, one has to realize that there was not a sign of life for miles around; as far as the eye could reach no human habitation was in sight.

We now continued our journey down the river about 22 miles. As the country was in its wild state, we would every few miles come to an Indian wigwam, or small village with a lot of Indian children and halfbreeds playing around the wickeup, the men lying around, idle, and the squaws busy with their work. The scenery along this river is most wonderful and romantic. To the north of us stretches a long range of table lands covered with cedar, while to the south ranges of mountains, covered with pine timber, slope gently to the valley, with beautiful streams of clear, sparkling water flowing onward to the river.

Leaving the river we turned into a low pass to the south. After going about four miles, we saw a cabin in the distance. When we got near to it, a woman came to the door which was an opening with a blanket nailed up to serve as a door. The woman looked weather-tanned and ragged, showing evidence of a hard life. Brother McMurrin said, "Sister, you look to me like a Latter-day Saint woman." She replied, "You bet I do, and you look to me like Latter-day Saint men, and I am sure glad to see you." She invited us into her humble home. It would be difficult to describe the destitute condition of that "home." She had two little



PARTY LEAVING WOODRUFF ON A TEN-DAYS TRIP THROUGH THE WOODRUFF STAKE.
Personnel: On the Porch: Mrs. Agnes S. Baxter and Laura Hickman; On the Lawn: Nellie Rex, Jane Smith and Hattie Putnam; In front Carriage: Savannah C. Putnam, Thos. J. Tingey, Wm. H. Lee, Pres. John M. Baxter; In second Carriage: Hyrum J. Norris, sen., Arthur McKinnon and Geo. A. Peart.

children, one in her arms and one about two years old. Her husband was away at work on some of the ranches. There was not a fence, or any improvement on the place except the cabin, with a dirt roof, containing one room, no door, window or floor. The woman was cheerful, and told us they had lived there for two years, hoping to get the water out on their land. Now they hoped they would be able to get it out the next year. They had hauled all the water they used from the river four miles away in barrels. Not a living thing was seen on the place except the woman and her two children, and no neighbors within three miles in this wild Indian country. We told the lady that we expected to hold meeting next day at a little settlement, about three miles away, called Manila. She said she would be there. We then left for Manila. It was heavy sand from this place to Manila, and on arriving we found a little village with the houses built close together. The settlers there had driven a tunnel in the mountain, about half a mile away from the town and secured a little stream of water, which they had piped into the town and built a large tank of hewn logs in the middle of the town, and this furnished their water supply, but they had a canal leading to their farms. This is a small colony of people who had come from Beaver in southern Utah. They had built a little meeting house, about ten feet square, with round logs, a dirt roof and no door. The people were so poor that we could not think of imposing upon them to feed us, so we camped out in a yard and gave them all the food we could spare in the way of some canned goods that we had with us. When we awoke in the morning, the sun was shining in our faces, and on getting out of bed we found all our shoes shined up and standing by our bed. Brother Woodruff had arisen early, shined our shoes, had a

camp fire made, and was cooking our breakfast. This was the only time I have had an Apostle shine my shoes. We held meeting with the people in the little cabin, seated on slab seats, and had the satisfaction at least, of having our meeting



STAKE OFFICE IN WOODRUFF

house crowded to its capacity. A splendid spirit was manifested; the people were starving for spiritual food. We organized a branch with Willis Twitchell as presiding Elder, and leaving Manila about 4 o'clock in the evening, we drove up Sheep Creek, about four miles, to the intersection of the

road that leads accross the mountains to Vernal. Here we camped that night.

Next morning Elders Woodruff and McMurrin took the road to Vernal, and Bro. Sessions and I drove north to Henry's Fork and thence traveled by way of Fort Bridger home.

The good woman that we first met on the desert was at the meeting at Manila. She carried the baby and took the little girl by the hand and walked through the sand for three miles. It took Brother Sessions and me ten days to make this trip. The day we organized the Manila Branch was August 13, 1899.

In 1900 steps were taken to build a stake office at Woodruff. We erected a brick building containing a Clerk's Office, a High Council Chamber, a Bishop's Office, and also a room upstairs for a prayer circle. We finished the house nicely, and it was a very attractive building. The Church paid \$400 and the stake and Woodruff Ward did the rest.

Peter McKinnon, the new Bishop of the Woodruff Ward, moved from Randolph to Woodruff. He had been in the store business at Randolph, and as he did not know what he could do at Woodruff to make a living, decided to build a store and go into business there. He purchased a lot adjoining mine on the main street, built a brick store and put in a stock of goods. He was unsuccessful, however, and sold his store and stock to me. I then moved my frame store over against the brick store. Having the postoffice, I built a place for it in the brick store, I was postmaster at Woodruff for twenty-one years.

About the time the stake was organized Charles Kingston, of Evanston, an electrician, and I promoted the building of a telephone line from Evanston via the Chambers—

Whitney Ranch, via the Neponsit Ranch, through Woodruff and Randolph, to Sage, Wyo., and to the B. Q. Ranch. The company was organized with John M. Baxter as president, Charles Stone as secretary and treasurer, Ed. Chapman and Charles Kingston two of the directors. The company was named the Uinta-Rich Telephone Company. I had charge of getting out the poles and the setting of the same, while Charles Kingston was in charge of stringing the wire and the electrical part of the enterprise. This was all completed and giving service in the fall of 1898.

At this time I was interested in a number of public enterprises entered into conjointly with the people of Evanston and the Bear River and Bear Lake valleys. There was a steam thrashing company of which I was president, and a railway project from Evanston to Montpelier, through the Bear Lake Valley for which I secured the right of way from Evanston to Laketown. The Union Pacific Railroad Company sent out an engineer, whom I took over the proposed route in a white-topped rig. The Laketown Canyon grade being so heavy, the project was abandoned. The Uinta being so heavy, the project was abandoned. I was also elected a director of the Uinta County Fair Association, and of the Uinta Milling & Elevator Company, and promotor of the Creamery, established at Woodruff, with Nelson S. Bishop, from southern Utah, in charge. This institution was afterwards turned over to James Stuart of Woodruff who carried on for a number of years.

CHAPTER XX

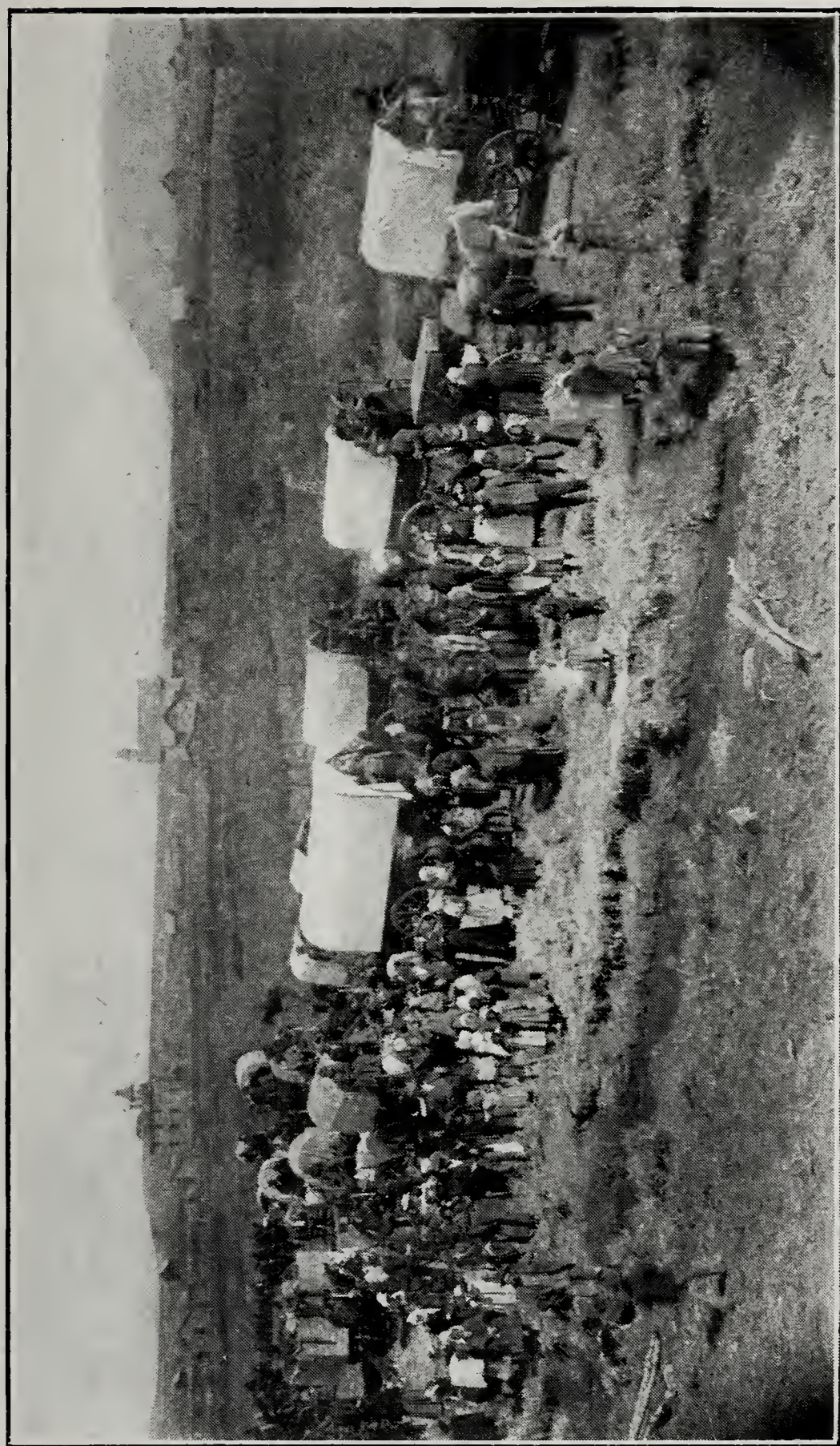
COLONIZATION OF THE BIG HORN COUNTRY

In 1900 arrangements were being made to colonize the Big Horn Country. Elders Woodruff and McMurrin had returned to Salt Lake and given to the general authorities of the Church a good account of the country. After hearing their reports, the general authorities selected eighteen men, from different localities in Idaho—Southern Utah and other places—men of great experience and good judgment—to go and look over the Big Horn Country and report, as to their judgment in colonizing it with Latter-day Saints. I was told by Bro. Woodruff of an interesting little incident that happened on this trip. The brethren were camped in the Cody Valley where William Cody, known in Indian days as Buffalo Bill, had a ranch. In the evening, after the brethren had made their camp, Buffalo Bill, riding in his buckboard, came to visit them. After getting acquainted and learning the business of these men in that country, he went to his buckboard and brought out several bottles of whiskey which he passed around, but no one would drink. He was very much surprised, and took the whiskey back to the buckboard. He then brought a box of cigars with the same result. Then he said, "Well, you are the d——t outfit I ever saw; you will neither drink nor smoke, what in h——l *can* I do for you." They said, "You can tell us some of your experiences of frontier days." Brother Woodruff said that he then spent the time until long after midnight telling them stories of Indian fighting and frontier life, which was intensely interesting to the company.

After the return of these men they all reported favorably, and the general authorities of the Church called a number of families from different localities to move out there and colonize that country. I received a letter at that time from Pres. Lorenzo Snow, then President of the Church, requesting Brother Sessions and me, to meet him at his office in Salt Lake City. He informed us of the plan to colonize the Big Horn Country, and said that it would be a part of the Woodruff Stake. He also said that Brother Sessions had been recommended to the Presidency as a very good man to take charge of the construction of the canal to be taken out of the Shoshone River. He turned to Brother Sessions and said, "Brother Sessions, it is the desire of the Presidency of the Church, that you move your family out into that country, take charge of the construction of that canal, and stay with it until it is completed. Now, what do you say about it?" Brother Sessions answered, "Pres. Snow, if that is the wish of the Presidency of the Church, I will finish that canal, or I will lay my bones down in it." We returned home and Brother Sessions commenced at once to make preparations for moving to the Big Horn. He had a great task before him. He was a partner, stockholder and manager of a large land and livestock company, that owned thousands of acres of land and hundreds of cattle and horses. Four of his boys, all married men, with families, were employed by the company. Bro. Sessions dissolved partnership with this company, selling his share at a great loss. Then he, with his boys and their families, were all ready to start with a company which was to meet at Ham's Fork early the following April. At this time I received a letter from Apostle A. Owen Woodruff, stating that he had been appointed by the Presidency of the Church to take charge of the coloniz-

ing of the Big Horn Country, and he would like me to assist him in the matter as it belonged to the Woodruff Stake. He informed me that it had been arranged to have all the people meet me at a bridge spanning Ham's Fork River, about four miles above Kemmemer, Wyo., that we were to organize the colonizers there into companies and start them out from that point, and that he would call for me at Woodruff. I at once began to make preparations for his coming and was ready when he called.

The Sessions Company was expected to be ready in a day or two after we left. The day after we arrived at the Ham's Fork Bridge, a heavy snow storm occurred. The snow fell about a foot deep, which made it very disagreeable for those who were waiting at the bridge, as well as for those who were on their way. As the people arrived, we proceeded to organize them into companies, and send them on their way. Brother North of Mill Creek, Salt Lake County, who was in charge of the stock, arrived there two days after us. We organized the companies very much after the order of the Pioneers when they were crossing the plains. We had from ten to fifteen wagons in a company with a captain, wagon master, chaplin, etc. During the first week spent at the bridge we organized six companies and started them out: but Bro. Sessions and his company had not yet arrived, the storm had increased in its fury until it was terrible. We were quite concerned about this company, and I secured a good team, a light rig and a young man named Walter Graham to go with me. We searched through the hills in the direction from which we thought they would come, and travelled until dark, without finding any trace of them. We made our way down to Fossil Station on Twin Creeks, where we put up our horses, and Brother Graham stayed here all



BYRON SESSIONS AND COMPANY LEAVING WOODRUFF FOR THE BIG HORN COUNTRY

night, while I decided to take the first train and go to Woodruff, thinking that when the storm came up, the Sessions company might have gone back to Woodruff to wait there until the storm was over.

At Fossil I boarded the train which arrived at 10 o'clock at night. The wind had increased until it was a perfect hurricane, and was blowing directly up the canyon. When the brakeman let me in the car it was with great difficulty that he was able to close the car door. I rode to Sage Station, a distance of twenty miles, where I left the train, as that was my nearest point from which to reach my destination. The wind was still blowing fiercely. I tried to get into the station, but it was locked. There was only one house there and as I could see no light, I supposed that the people had gone to bed, and surmised that they perhaps would not let me in anyway, thinking that I was a tramp. I remembered that there were some coke ovens, about a half mile down the track, and made up my mind to go there and crawl into one of them in order to get shelter from the storm. I could hardly face the storm, and the gumbo mud stuck to my shoes until they became quite heavy and cumbersome, but with it all I managed to get to the coke ovens. Just as I reached them the storm cleared up a little and I saw a white object down in the willows by the creek. Making my way down to it I found it to be a covered wagon. I pounded on the wagon box and said, "Hello partner, I would like to bunk with you tonight." The man woke up and drowsely said, "All right, crawl in." I dropped my shoes, mud and all, on the ground, raised the wagon cover as best I could and crawled in. I was wet and cold. The man rolled over to the side of the wagon to give me room and neither of us spoke again that night. When we woke in the morning, he



PIONEER COLONY ON WAY TO THE BIG HORN COUNTRY

wanted to know who I was, and where I came from, and I asked the same questions of him. I learned that he was from Bear Lake, and was on his way to the Big Horn. He had got stranded there in the storm, and on account of the gumbo mud could not proceed any further. He also said that two or three families were camped about a half mile below, who were also en route to the Big Horn; they were also stranded. After breakfast I went to them and found Hyrum Cook from Bear Lake and two other families. I had to remain three days with these people before I could get some one from Randolph to come and get me.

When I arrived at Woodruff I learned that Byron Sessions and his company had not come back. They had taken what they thought to be a short cut off, and that instead of going up Twin Creeks by way of Sage Station, they had gone east from Woodruff, intending to follow the ridge around by Elk Mountain. Being quite concerned about their welfare we sent a man on horseback to follow their tracks. He found that they got as far as Dutch John's Ranch at the foot of Elk Mountain, when the storm struck them, and just made themselves comfortable at the ranch until the storm was over. I had been within three miles of them the night I went to Fossil. When these companies arrived at the Wind River, the stream was very much swollen, and the ferry boat was gone, so that they could not cross the stream. Brother Woodruff called a prayer meeting, and they prayed that the way might be opened so that they could continue their journey. That night the weather turned very cold and continued so for two or three days, until the river fell so low that they were able to ford it with their wagons, and all crossed with perfect safety. When the colonists arrived at their destination, they

pitched their tents at the head of the canal, and commenced their gigantic task.

The construction of the canal was a greater undertaking than they had anticipated. At the canal head, where they took the water out from the Shoshone River, they encountered great boulders, some as large as a scraper. The people in this camp had all things common; they pooled their foodstuffs and were like one great family, they organized and went at all their work systematically. One day, while working at the head of the canal, the scrapers dragging over those large boulders and cobble rocks, making a terrific noise, Senator C. D. Clark of Wyoming, who was out there campaigning, suddenly came over a hill and looked upon this wonderful sight; in amazement he enquired what it was all about. He was told that it was only the "Mormons" swarming. Later, when the colonists had got located in their homes, the senator, who was again on the campaign, stayed over night with Brother Sessions, who got his family together in the evening and sang hymns and had prayers before retiring. This made a deep impression upon the senator.

During the "Smoot Investigation" at Washington, Senator Clark defended Senator Smoot and the "Mormon" people, and referred to this occasion, saying, "A people that are as devoted to God as these people are, cannot be a bad people." Senator Clark was always a kind friend to the "Mormons" after this.

In the meantime, new Church organizations were effected in the Woodruff Stake. Thus the Kemmerer Branch of the Woodruff Stake was organized in June, 1900, the Shoshone Branch organized July 13, 1900, and the name changed to Cowley, Oct., 14, 1900, and the Spring Valley Branch organized Nov. 18, 1900.

In the year 1901, when the colonies in the Big Horn Country became settled, and a few wards and branches had been organized, it was decided to organize a stake of Zion there. I received a letter from Apostle A. Owen Woodruff to this effect, and he requested me to go out there with him to assist in the stake organization. I left home in May, 1901, and went by rail via Ogden to Butte, Montana. Arriving in Butte on a Sunday I met some of the missionaries who were laboring there, and was invited to stay over and attend their meetings. There was a nice little branch of the Church at Butte at that time, and a good congregation at the meeting. I did the speaking, and after the meeting a well dressed lady came to the stand and introduced herself to me, saying that she was a daughter of Brigham Young, and had been living in Butte for many years. I had a very pleasant conversation with her. She said she had married a man who was not of our faith, and they had not been associated with our people. She had mingled with the highest society in the city of Butte, but always had a yearning for the society of the Latter-day Saints, and embraced every opportunity to attend their meetings. She assisted the elders in paying for their hall and contributed in any way she could to assist them in their work. She seemed to be a very choice lady, cultured and refined.

From Butte I took the Great Northern Railway to Billings, Montana. This was thirty-five miles from our colonies and I was met there by one of our boys with a team and taken to Byron. My friends who had left Woodruff and Randolph were extremely happy to meet me, and could not do enough to make it pleasant for me during the time I was there.

There were in the Big Horn Basin at this time the following wards and branches of the Church: Byron, Burling-

ton, Cowley, Lovell, Otto and Ionia. The conference convened at Cowley, in quite a large meeting house which had not as yet been finished. Brother Woodruff and I had a long conversation concerning the organization of the stake. Two men were considered for the presidency of the stake, namely, Byron Sessions and Jesse W. Crosby, Jun., Bro. Sessions had acted as my counselor in the bishopric of the Woodruff Ward for eight years, and in the stake since its organization. He had been very faithful and I had become very much attached to him, and naturally he was my choice. Bro. Crosby was a good man, and had acted as president of the Panguitch Stake in Southern Utah for 18 years, and therefore had had a great experience as a stake president. Brother Woodruff was satisfied that he was looking for the position, and thought that if he was not chosen, he would be very much disappointed. After full consideration we decided upon Byron Sessions for stake president with Jesse W. Crosby, Jun., and Charles Welch as counselors, and J. M. Grant, as stake clerk.

After this decision, we went to conference. The people had assembled and the house was well filled, Brother Woodruff and I were the speakers at the first meeting. At the noon recess, Brother Woodruff called about twenty men who had been selected as stake officers to remain, and we met in the corridor of the church. He lined them all up like a row of soldiers and interrogated them, one after another, concerning their habits, the observance of the Word of Wisdom, payment of tithes, etc. When the turn came to James McNiven to answer, he said, "Brother Woodruff, I can answer you as the young man answered the Savior, 'All these things have I kept from my youth up,' that is, I have been guilty of breaking all of them." He was certainly a wild fellow. He had

settled at Burlington, and when he came to meeting, he drove up to the church with his team on the full run, and checked his horses up with a big yell. The people in the meeting all raised up in their seats, but Bro. Woodruff said, "Be calm, folks, it is just Brother McNiven coming to meeting." The Bishop of Burlington Ward, Richard Packard, was a fine little man and considerate of the feelings of the people—a very lovable and kind man. The people thought the world of him, but he had little executive ability and the ward was in a run-down condition. On this account Brother Woodruff decided to make a change and put Brother McNiven in as Bishop of the Burlington Ward. When he mentioned the matter to me, I thought this was once that he was making a mistake, and I told him so, but he knew McNiven much better than I did.

After all the stake officers were sustained, the matter of a change in the bishopric of the Burlington Ward was presented. Brother Woodruff explained the conditions and remarked that Bishop Packard had been spoken to and was quite willing to be released, and after a little talk proposed that Bro. Packard be released as Bishop of the Burlington Ward. This proposition was sustained, and Brother Woodruff then presented the name of James McNiven to be the Bishop of the said Ward. The people were astonished, and he did not receive a vote. Brother Woodruff then said, "I have had a conversation with Brother McNiven and he has promised me that he will stop all his bad habits, and that if I want him to accept that position, he will do so, and do the very best he can." Bro. Woodruff promised the people that if they would accept Brother McNiven and sustain him as their Bishop for one year, and were not satisfied, he would release him. He then again presented him for the

vote of the people, and Brother McNiven was unanimously sustained.

The following day Brother Sessions and I drove to Burlington to install Bro. McNiven as Bishop and reorganize the ward. We took supper at his home, and his wife set a cup of tea at his plate as usual. He pushed it away and said, "No, Betty, I promised Brother Woodruff that I would observe the Word of Wisdom, and tea, coffee, liquor and tobacco will never enter my mouth again." The meeting had been appointed for 8 o'clock p. m. and the house was crowded to the doors. I never attended such a meeting. The people were broken-hearted at the loss of their Bishop, and the thought of having "Jim" McNiven to take his place; but they were loyal to authority and sustained him. After the business of the meeting, and the officers were all presented and sustained, McNiven was asked to speak. He confessed his sins, said he had been rough and careless in his habits, but proclaimed that he was true to the Gospel and to the Priesthood, and there was nothing in this world that was honorable that he would not do, if the Priesthood required it of him. He bore one of the strongest testimonies I have ever heard, and told the people that it was as hard for him to accept this position of Bishop as it was for the people to accept him as their Bishop; but he had never refused to do anything in the Church that was required of him; and if they would support him, he would do all in his power to magnify his calling and make them a good Bishop. When he got through speaking, the people were in tears, and Brother Sessions and I were also shedding tears. The spirit in the meeting was wonderful and we all knew that the Lord had acknowledged the appointment of Bishop McNiven. I left the next day and did not see Bishop McNiven for many years. When I

finally met him again at a conference in Salt Lake City, I learned that he had made a splendid Bishop and got the ward out of its financial difficulties, and kept every promise that he made to Brother Woodruff.

We returned to Byron, the next day, a forty mile drive, and the following day the brethren took me over the country and up to the head of the canal, showing me some of the difficulties encountered in its construction. A very remarkable thing, was the splitting of a rock that was on the survey of the canal, not very far from the head. The brethren told me that they had tried every possible way to get around this great rock, but had failed. One day while the men were at work near the rock Brothers Woodruff and Sessions, who were in the canal a short distance below, knelt down in the canal and asked the Lord to show them how they could overcome this great obstacle. When they arose from their knees Brother Sessions called to the men who were working near the rock to get out of the way, and they then witnessed the rock split in two, and the lower half fall down the hill, just leaving room for the canal. This remarkable event seemed to be a direct answer to prayer. When the brethren got the water into the canal, the ground was so dry and porous that water sank into the earth and in many places the whole of the canal was washed down the hill side.

Near the town of Byron there was a basin called the Dry Lake. Sometime after the settlers had the water in the canal the seepage filled the lake and also caused the mineral to rise on some of the farms, so much so that they had to be abandoned. They, however, got gas and oil, which, to some extent, offset the destruction to their lands by the mineral.

I remained in the Big Horn Country about a week after, thus visiting with the people, and looking over the country,

and then returned home over the same route that I went out. On this trip I travelled about 1,500 miles and it cost me \$50 for train fare. I had been very closely associated for many years with these people in the Big Horn Basin who had come from Woodruff and Randolph, and was very much attached to them, and it was very hard to part with them again. On May 4, 1901, Pres. Byron Sessions was released as first counselor in the Woodruff Stake presidency, on account of being called to the Big Horn Colony. Bishop Archibald McKinnon of Randolph Ward was chosen to fill the vacancy. He was set apart the same day by Apostle A. Owen Woodruff, at Evanston, Wyo.

CHAPTER XXI

OTHER STAKE ACTIVITIES

Among the changes effected in the Woodruff Stake the following deserve mention: Spring Valley Ward was organized May 4, 1901, with Joseph Dean as Bishop. Before this time it had been a branch, organized Nov. 18, 1900, with Edward Burton as president, William J. Starkey as first counselor, William Reed as second counselor and Reese William Gibbs as branch clerk. On account of Bishop Joseph Dean moving to Salt Lake City, the Spring Valley Ward was reorganized in September, 1903, with Henry T. Williams as Bishop, Joseph B. Martin as first and William Reed as second counselor; David Gerrard as clerk and recorder, and Frank Ovey as choir leader. After continuing a few years the mines closed down, the people moved to other places and the Spring Valley Ward was disorganized.

Hilliard Branch of the Church was reorganized June 31, 1901, with Joseph E. Bell as presiding Elder.

On Aug. 4, 1901, not being able to get a postoffice by the name of Owen in the State of Wyoming (there already being a postoffice of that name), the name of the Owen Ward was changed to Lyman Ward, in honor of Francis M. Lyman.

Glencoe Branch was organized Aug. 25, 1901.

Diamondville Branch was reorganized Sept. 14, 1901, with Andrew Easton as presiding Elder.

Almy Branch was reorganized in 1901, with William Beverage as presiding Elder.

The Stake Office and High Council rooms at Woodruff were dedicated by Apostle John Henry Smith, Nov. 4, 1901.

Apostle John W. Taylor made a visit to Woodruff Stake and I accompanied him to Diamondville and Kemmerer, when these two branches were raised to the status of wards, Feb. 2, 1902. On this trip something occurred at Kemmerer which caused some unpleasantness. Daniel Clark, who had been the presiding Elder at Kemmerer for some time, was a very energetic man. He had built a good meeting house, and was thoroughly enjoying his labors as presiding Elder. I had informed him of our visit and at that time would have the branch raised to the status of a ward, and urged him to have a large attendance at the meeting. Of course, he expected to be made the Bishop, and I had no other thought. When we arrived at the meeting house the building was crowded. Bro. Clark had been around and notified everyone of the meeting and urged them to come. When the business of installing the Bishop was taken up, Brother Taylor said, "That all things were done in this Church by common consent of the people, and suggested that they vote for the man they wanted for their Bishop. We then appointed some men to make ballots and had them passed around in order to let the people put on the paper the name of the man who was their choice for Bishop. After the ballots came in, Brother Taylor and I looked them over and found that several names had been suggested, but that David McMillan and Daniel Clark had the largest number of votes, and McMillan more than Clark. "Well," said Brother Taylor, "McMillan is the man." I said, "Brother Taylor, that will never do—Bro. Clark has worked like a hero to build up this branch and has built and finished this meeting house, and I think he is the man that should be the Bishop." Further I said, "Many of these people who are here tonight have never attended meeting or taken any active part in the ward. I am sure Bro. Clark

expects to be promoted, and he is of such a temperament that if he is not made Bishop, it will kill him spiritually." Bro. Taylor said, "Well, the majority rules in this Church, and McMillan is the man." So McMillan was presented and sustained, and it killed Clark spiritually and broke his heart. He laid the whole blame to me and would not speak to me for a long, long time. Bishop McMillan made a splendid Bishop and I think was much more wise and better qualified for a Bishop than was Bro. Clark.

On Feb. 19, 1902, our girl, Nellie Rex, and John Neilson were married in the Salt Lake Temple, and, after returning to our home at Woodruff, an elaborate reception was tendered them, and in the evening a dance was given to the general public in the dance hall. At a conference held at Lyman, August 2, 1902, we had the honor and pleasure of having with us Pres. Joseph F. Smith and wife, Pres. Anton H. Lund and Apostle Hyrum M. Smith. This was a wonderful conference and a great treat to the people of the Woodruff Stake to have two of the First Presidency and an Apostle in attendance. An arrangement was made that the people gather together and meet the visitors when they arrived Saturday morning. On the road leading from Carter, the railway station, there is a hill and a large dugway leading into the town of Lyman; one cannot see the town until he gets to the top of the hill.

When we learned that Pres. Smith and his party were approaching this hill we formed in procession, and went out to the brink of the hill to meet them. The procession was led by the Lyman brass band, followed by the Priesthood of the Stake, the Sunday School, and the general assembly. This was a wonderful sight in this wilderness. We formed in a line on either side of the road and when the party came

to the top of the hill, the band played an appropriate selection. Pres. Smith and party stopped their buggy in the middle of the procession, and I, at the head of the Priesthood, and in their behalf, made a short address of welcome, after which the children sang, "We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet." Pres. Smith was much overcome in his feelings and shed tears. This honor and respect to the servants of the Lord started our conference out with a splendid spirit, which continued all throughout the meetings. The following day, Sunday, was fast day, and while it was not usual to bless children on fast day when conference was held on that day, some of the sisters had a great desire to have Pres. Smith bless their babies. I spoke to the President about it, and he said, "Yes; the time could not be spent to better advantage," so I announced that anyone who had a baby to be blessed might bring them up to the stand, and time would be given for that purpose. The mothers came up, one at a time, with their babies, and each mother requested Pres. Smith to bless her baby. A great number of babies were blessed on that occasion, and just as the President thought he had got through, a mother came up with a baby under each arm. This caused a great deal of merriment, in which President Smith heartily joined.

The day following conference, the President and party were taken over the Valley to Fort Bridger, and shown the Old Fort and its buildings. President Smith remarked: "Fifty-four years ago, as a boy, I passed over this country. It was then the home of lizards and snakes, and there was not a human habitation in the country." He further said that it was wonderful to see what the people of this district had done since they had settled this place.

After remaining a day or two, the visitors returned to

their homes, expressing their pleasure at what they had seen, and the hospitable way in which they had been entertained by the people.

The following chronological account of Church activities in the Woodruff Stake has at least local interest :

Sister Lucy F. Grant, the first president of the Relief Societies of the Woodruff Stake, had gone with the colonists to settle the Big Horn Country. She was a very choice woman and a splendid president, loved by everybody. We were very sorry to lose her from this stake. Sister Sarah Tyson, who had acted as president of the Randolph Ward Relief Society for twenty-five years and had made a great success of that organization, was chosen to succeed Sister Grant as president of the Woodruff Stake Relief Societies.

In May, 1902, the Kemmerer meeting house was dedicated by Joseph W. McMurrin.

In June, 1902, Bridger Buttes Branch was reorganized.

On April 1, 1903, the Woodruff Stake Primary Board was reorganized with Eliza McFarlane as president.

On August 2, 1903, the Y. L. M. I. A. Board was reorganized with Laura Burdette as president, and,

On Sept. 10, 1903, Mountain View branch was organized with James Graham as president.

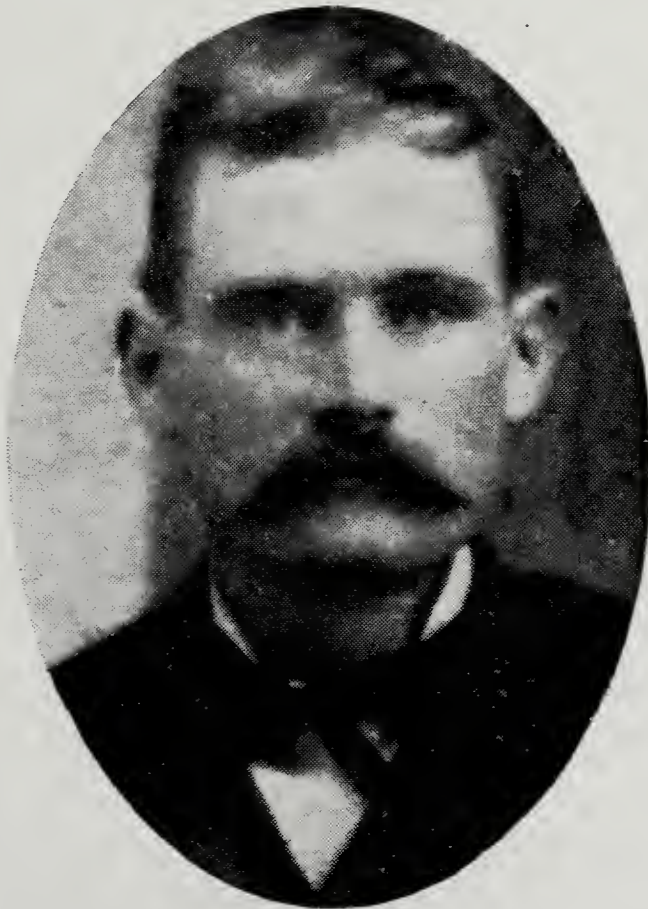
On February 6, 1904, Charles Kingston was released as the second counselor in the stake presidency, as he was moving away from the stake, and Thomas J. Tingey, who had acted as stake clerk, was chosen as his successor. Pres. Kingston was a splendid stake officer, was always ready and on hand to do his share in anything that was required of him. He was a very intelligent man and well informed in the doctrines of the Church. He was the registrar in the land office at Evanston, and assisted the colonies in the Big Horn Coun-

try in securing titles to their lands, and water rights. He was a very useful man in the stake and it was a great loss to us when he left.

On February 6, 1904, John A. Guild was released as superintendent of religion classes, and Oluf Larson was chosen as his successor; on the same date Henry Hoffman was chosen as superintendent of the Stake Y. M. M. I. A.

On Feb. 24, 1904, a reception was given to Pres. Charles Kingston at Woodruff, Utah. A banquet was given in his honor, and all the stake officers were present.

John Neilson was called by the stake authorities to attend the L. D. S. University, to take a musical course in directorship under Professor Evan Stephens. Brother Neilson became a very efficient musical director, was made stake chorister and advanced the musical interests in all the wards of the stake.



CHARLES KINGSTON

CHAPTER XXII

WITH ANDREW JENSON AMONG THE COWBOYS

In August, 1904, Elder Andrew Jenson, assistant Church Historian, made a visit to the stake to gather historical data. After paying us a very short visit, he went into the Star Valley Stake, and returned to the Woodruff Stake in September and made a tour of the stake. He was accompanied by Archibald McKinnon of the stake presidency, David E. Fackrell of the Sunday School and Pearl Brough of the Relief Society. This company traveled through the mining camps and to Lyman. When these parties returned home, Alice Jackson of the Relief Society, Laura Burdett of the Y. L. M. I. A., Eliza McFarlane of the Primary Association and I accompanied Brother Jenson over the remainder of the stake.

We went to the Manila branch, about 125 miles from Woodruff Ward on Henry's Fork of Green River. On the way, about 32 miles southeast of Lyman, there is a little village called Lone Tree where a few families had located, and although we knew it was a pretty wild place, we thought we might organize a Sunday school there. A house had been built not far from the road, among some pine trees. Here we saw children playing around the house. We drove up to the house, and I, on entering, found a woman with a very large family of children. They were in very destitute circumstances. The children were very shy, not having been accustomed to meeting strangers. I told the lady that we thought to organize a Sunday school there, "and," said I, "I

see you have a lot of children here, that need the benefit of a Sunday school. What do you think about it?" She said, in a very drawling tone, "Well, I don't know, but I don't think it would work; they tried that once before, and it didn't go. The cowboys rode into the house and shot all the windows out, and scared the kids nearly to death and broke it up, so I don't think it would work." I asked her if she would send her children, if we should organize a Sunday School. She said, "I reckon I would, but I don't think it will work." I said, "We are thinking of holding a meeting in the school house on our return. Do you think the cowboys will interfere with us?" She answered, "Wall, I don't know, they might shoot around, but I don't think that they would shoot you. They shot a man here last week, but he needed killing." So the prospect of us having a Sunday school at Lone Tree was not very flattering, but we thought we would try and so we posted the notice on the school house door, appointing a meeting for the following Monday evening at 8 o'clock. The sisters plead with us not to attempt this meeting, but Brother Jenson and I thought it would be all right.

We went on to Manila where we held a branch conference, and installed Peter G. Wall as Bishop of the contemplated ward. Brother Jenson obtained his historical data, and after spending a pleasant time with the people at Manila, we drove back to Lone Tree, arriving there a little before sundown on Monday evening.

We heard of a man by the name of Harry Bullock, who had relatives at Provo, Utah, who were members of the church, and we thought that he also might be a member; so we drove to his house. Mr. Bullock was not at home, but his wife was there and they had a large number of hay men,

as they were just in the midst of their haying. The wife hesitated for some time before she let us in; but finally did ask us in, and the boys took care of the team. She was preparing supper for the hay hands and said that as soon as they were through with their supper, she would prepare some food for us.

We had not been there long before the cowboys came in from the hay field; they came galloping as fast as their horses could run, shouting and yelling at the top of their voices. Our ladies were very nervous and did not want to stay, but there was nothing else to do.

While the boys were eating, I told them the object of our visit, and asked them to come to the meeting. They said, "Sure we will come," but one said, "When you organize a Sunday school here and make it go, I will show you a white crow." After finishing their meal, they retired to their bunk house, and after we had eaten, it was time for us to go to meeting, as we had to walk a half mile to the school house. It was getting dark and we had to go through the woods. One of the ladies took Brother Jenson by the arm, and the other two took my arm, one on each side of me; I never had ladies cling so tight to me before or since, as those sisters did, that night.

When we arrived at the school house, no one was there. We found a coal oil lamp, lit it and set it upon a cupboard in the center of the hall, then we sat down and waited.

About 9 o'clock, a woman with a little child, came in. At 10 o'clock a number of cowboys came. They had their leather shaps, spurs and six-shooters hanging to them, and at 11 o'clock we commenced our meeting, with quite a little congregation. These cowboys were not particular about making a noise; they did not take off their hats, but acted as if

they had never been in a meeting before. Brother Jenson was the first speaker. He had recently returned from the Holy Land and carried with him some souvenirs, among which was a Star of Bethlehem, which he had bought at Bethlehem, some stones from Mount Carmel and the Sea of Galilee, and other little trophies. Showing these and talking of his travels through Palestine was quite interesting to that unusual group of listeners. I then addressed the assembly, speaking of the organization of a Sunday school, of the benefit that it could be to the children, and incidentally said that sometimes under the auspices of the Sunday school, we got up dances, etc. One of the cowboys yelled: "Whoopee, etc., let's have a Sunday school." The others all agreed with similar shouts, so we proceeded to organize. We chose Harry Bullock as the superintendent. He could raise no objection, because he was absent. Two girls who had attended the B. Y. U. at Provo, Utah, volunteered to assist. They were voted in, and we finally effected our organization. The voting seemed to be very amusing to some of the cowboys. One fellow sitting near the center of the room first voted with one hand, then with both hands, and finally with his hands and feet. As the voting continued, his enthusiasm seemed to increase. After returning home, I learned that the Sunday school lasted two weeks, the girls went on the round up with the boys out on the range, and the Sunday school was broken up. Several years later, however, we organized again and had a good Sunday school at Lone Tree, which is still functioning.

On our way home, between Milburne and Spring Valley (a railway station), we encountered a terrific snow storm. Elder Jenson had come from Salt Lake City, partly for the purpose of getting away from the heat, and had his sum-

mer clothes on. We had an open rig and he nearly perished with the cold. The sisters also suffered extremely with the cold before we got to Spring Valley.

Thomas J. Tingey, stake clerk, was appointed as second counselor in the stake presidency, Feb. 7, 1904, and on the 4th of December he was released as stake clerk and Bishop Pèter McKinnon of the Woodruff Ward was appointed his successor. Brother Tingey was very thorough in his work as stake clerk and his records were in an excellent condition.

On Dec. 10, 1904, Elder William H. Lee was released as president of the High Priests' Quorum, and George Eyre of Lyman, Wyoming, was chosen as his successor. Brother Lee was a dear friend to me since I was a boy, and I held him in very high esteem. George Eyer, who had been a companion to Pres. Joseph F. Smith in his mission field, was, according to Pres. Smith, a very choice man, and later Pres. Smith took great pleasure in ordaining Brother Eyer a Patriarch.

On Dec. 25, 1904, the Woodruff Ward was re-organized with Carl G. Youngberg as Bishop, Peter McKinnon being released on account of his appointment as stake clerk.

In the spring of 1905, Pres. Archibald McKinnon, Thos. J. Tingey, George A. Neville and I made a tour of the Stake (excepting Manila and Rock Springs wards). We spent two weeks making this visit. While on this tour, after leaving Milburne, we went to Mountain View where we found the people in a state of excitement. A woman and a little boy undertook to cross Smith's Fork River. The melting snows had swollen the stream and the current was very swift. The party drove their team into the river, and the current took team and wagon down the stream. In some unaccountable way the little boy got out, but the woman and the horses were

drowned. The boy had just reached the store at Mountain View, when we arrived there, and we joined in the search for the woman. The horses and wagon were found some distance below where they went in the stream, but the woman was not with the outfit. The horses were both dead when found. We kept up a search for the woman all that day, but without success. The next day her body was found some two miles below. This was the same woman who came to the meeting at Lone Tree at 9 o'clock in the evening with this same little boy, on the night when we organized a Sunday school among the cowboys.

On Jan. 27, 1905, the Almy Branch was reorganized, William Beveridge being released and James Weir appointed as his successor.

On April 1, 1905, Bishop Joseph Soulsby of Rock Springs Ward was released on account of moving from the stake.

On June 4, 1905, Bishop John Kennedy of Argyle Ward was released.

On July 8, 1905, James Weir was released as presiding Elder at Almy, and James Blight appointed to succeed him.

CHAPTER XXIII

MY MOTHER'S DEATH—MUSICAL INTEREST

My mother died Aug. 3, 1905, at Randolph. The stake conference was appointed to be held Aug. 5, and 6, at Woodruff. Elders Rudger Clawson and George Albert Smith, of the Council of the Twelve, being in attendance. They held the first day's meetings of the conference at Woodruff, but on account of mother's funeral held the Sunday meetings of the conference at Randolph, in connection with the funeral. The tabernacle was beautifully decorated and there was a very large assembly. Mother was very highly esteemed by the people of Bear River Valley. Apostles Rudger Clawson and George Albert Smith, Bishop John C. Gray and John Snowball were the speakers. They all spoke very highly of the life and labors of my mother, of her wonderful activity among the sick, and her labors in the Relief Society. Elder George Albert Smith referred to her wonderful success as a midwife. She had practiced obstetrics for over thirty years, had brought into the world eight hundred children, and had never lost a woman or a child. Elder Smith said it was the most remarkable record that he had ever heard of, and did not know that there ever was another such record. Before she commenced her profession in obstetrics, she was blessed and set apart for this labor by Elder Wilford Woodruff, who was then an Apostle. He promised her in the blessing that if she would have faith, and call in the Elders to her assistance, when it was necessary, that she would not lose a case. His words were literally fulfilled, as she did not lose a case in all these years. Just before mother died, she called me to her bedside and said, "I am about to pass

to the other side, and you must not mourn for me, because I have many more friends on the other side to meet me than I am leaving here. You know, John, some of the things I have passed through for the Gospel's sake, and now, knowing all I have suffered, if I had my life to live over, and it was necessary to go through it all again for the Gospel's sake, I would gladly do it." She exhorted me to be faithful, and bore a strong testimony of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus she passed away.

In the early history of the Woodruff Stake, a stake conference was held at Lyman, Wyoming, and a company of seventy-two people came from the Woodruff Ward, a distance of sixty-five miles, to attend that conference. They went in a body and took food and bedding and enough provisions to last them a week. We had a number of covered wagons, in which the people rode, and two wagons assigned to the commissary department of the company, which we called baggage wagons. Wesley K. Walton was stake chorister at this time and had with him his brass band, which consisted of himself, and ten sons. This was a very remarkable band; the Waltons were a very talented family. Many of these children could play an instrument before they had learned to read or write. The first day we travelled to Almy and camped in the Almy meeting house. The ladies slept in the covered wagons, while the men slept in the meeting house. Next day we drove until very late at night and pitched camp in a grove, about five miles west of Lyman, on Black's Fork river. We remained in this camp all the next day and night, and had a splendid time with music and songs. In the morning, after our first night in the grove, a farmer by the name of Olien (who lived near our camp but could not see us for the trees), was milking his cows, when all at once the band

struck up a spirited march tune. The cow jumped, knocking the farmer and his milk pails all over the yard. He was a good-natured fellow, however, visited us, and volunteered to supply all the milk the company could use, free of cost.

On the Saturday morning of the conference we moved and pitched our camp on the public square at Lyman. The Lyman people protested against this, saying that they were prepared to take care of us, but we preferred to keep our company all together, and have a camp fire. The people, however, replenished our food boxes. We entertained the conference people in the evening with music from the band and singing around the camp fire.

On our return we went by way of Cumberland and over the mountains by the Rock Ranch, thence down to Bear River and on to Woodruff. We drove to Cumberland the first day and pitched our camp a short distance from the town. In the evening, when the band began to play, many of the Cumberland people visited us and joined with us in an evening of social enjoyment. Next day we drove to the Rock Ranch, which is located upon the top of the summit between Bear River and the Muddy River, Bear River running west into Salt Lake and the Muddy River running east into Green River. The people at the Rock Ranch treated us very kindly and insisted upon cooking supper and breakfast for the company. They invited the ladies to sleep in the house and the men in the hay mow in the barn. They fed our teams and would not take any pay. The next day we drove to Bear River for noon, and when the lunch boxes were taken out of the baggage wagons, it was found that the most of them were empty. So I, with one or two other men, were dispatched to a nearby ranch to purchase some foodstuffs for dinner. We procured some bread, butter and milk and

with that and what we could find in the lunch boxes and a lot of sage chickens we had killed on the way we had a very fine dinner.

When the lunch boxes were being emptied an amusing little incident occurred. Two of Brother Walton's boys were a short distance from the crowd seated on their lunch box, and we can imagine the size of that box, when it would carry sufficient food for Bro. Walton and ten boys for a week. They were looking quite dejected, when Brother Walton said, "Come, boys, bring our box and let us divide up with the rest of the company." They did not pay any attention until he called them the second time; then one of them said in a loud whisper, "Pa, we have only got a bottle of ketchup left." "Well," said he, "bring it along, these people like ketchup." We returned home that evening, having had a pleasant ten days' outing and had attended conference.

This remarkable band and orchestra of Brother Walton's was a leading feature in many of our social, as well as religious gatherings. We made a number of excursions to Bear Lake, accompanied by this band. On one of these occasions we were in the midst of haying. Much of our hay had been cut down and was lying in the field, but on account of rain we had been unable to put it into the stack and barns. It would just rain enough every day to keep the hay wet, and we would be unable to handle it. We telephoned to Bear Lake and found that the weather was good over there and we immediately decided to gather a company, get Brother Walton's band and go to the Lake and let the hay dry while we were gone. I went down to see Brother Walton, who was in the hayfield turning over the hay that it might dry on the other side, when I proposed that we all go to the Lake. He said, "Well, Pres. Baxter, you see how we are situated,"

looked at me, then into the hay field and then at his boys. Then he shouted, "Come on, boys, Brother Baxter wants us to go to Bear Lake, we'll do our haying when we get back." This was characteristic of Bro. Walton; he never once refused to do anything that I requested him to do.

We gathered a number of wagons, provisioned them and started for the Lake where we arrived without mishap. We camped in the Cook Grove at Garden City, built a large camp fire, and the residents of Garden City came en masse to our free concert. They gathered around the camp fire, listening to the band. During one selection two elderly people desired to carry on a conversation, and the band interfered with it, and the louder the band played, the louder these people talked until their voices were raised almost to a shriek. Just then, the band stopped playing, leaving these two people still talking, in extremely high pitched voices. The effect can easily be conceived.

We gathered the group Sunday morning, and all went to Sunday school in the Garden City meeting house. The chorister who thought we had taken them by storm, wanted to give up his baton—in fact, give up anything, if it would please us; but we simply told him we were only there to help him do his singing. That was the largest choir he had ever had the privilege of leading. The chairs had been newly varnished and had not thoroughly dried and Bishop Weston, who comfortably filled his chair with its arms surrounding him, attempted to arise when the congregation were going to sing, but when he did so, he brought the chair with him, for he was stuck very fast indeed. During the concert in the grove, Sister "Tillie" Watts, a young lady from Salt Lake City, and a guest of Brother Walton's, was asked to sing. The selection was "Lindy Loo," and the band would play

the accompaniment. Our chorister John Neilson was invited to assist "Tillie" and a very pretty duet was made of this selection which was greatly enjoyed by the audience. "Tillie" later became very proficient in musical circles, always studious and advancing, until now everyone knows Sister Matilda Cahoon, chorister of the General Board of Primary Associations of the L. D. S. Church.

I am sure that there were not many wards in the Church, the size of this ward that displayed as much talent in music and the drama as did the Woodruff Ward. With Wesley K. Walton in charge of the band, orchestra and dramatic association, and John Nielsen director, and his wife organist of the choir, music and the drama were raised to a very high standard of excellency.

At a conference held in the Woodruff Ward, a concert was planned by the choir and the orchestra, this being a custom throughout our stake to stimulate an interest in music. Apostle Orson F. Whitney was in attendance. Being intensely interested in the work of this choir, I invited Brother Whitney to attend this concert. He rather declined, on account of having travelled all day, and said he would like to rest. I prevailed upon him to attend, and he did so with an understanding that if he got too tired, he would slip out, retire to his room and go to bed. But becoming very much interested in the concert he remained until its close. After returning home he said that he could have enjoyed another hour of that kind of entertainment. Brother Whitney, as an author, a poet, and musician, was deeply appreciative of the high order of this entertainment. I was very much pleased with the commendation of Brother Whitney regarding this choir and the excellence of its music, and was appreciative of his praise because of his knowledge and understanding

of such matters. Many of the brethren, in visiting our stake, and especially the Woodruff Ward, were very complimentary regarding the work of the Woodruff choir. I am not a musician, but I dearly love good music. I brought the music teacher and the first organ into the Randolph District, and was instrumental, in connection with Bishop Peter McKinnon, in bringing Bro. Neilson into the Woodruff Ward, especially in furnishing him employment, so that we might keep him there to build up the choir and advance the interest of music generally. In association with Sister Neilson, who was organist in the Ward for twenty-one years, we advanced the status of the choir, until the Woodruff Ward Choir became quite well known for the type of music presented. Not only was I interested in the Woodruff Ward Choir, but in all the choirs of the stake and music in general. At Evanston, James B. Smith was choir leader—a very proficient musician. For some time he felt very much discouraged with his labors, and was about to give up his choir work, when I made a personal visit to him at his home and talked to him an hour or two encouraging him to continue with the choir. This he consented to do, and later, in order to show his appreciation of my interest in him, he composed the musical setting to four of our hymns and dedicated them to the members of the stake presidency and Bishop Brown, giving them these titles: Baxter, Kingston, McKinnon and Brown.

A county fair was held at Evanston, Wyoming, to which the Woodruff choir was invited to furnish the entire musical program. Among those participating as soloists with the choir on that occasion were two of its members, who have since become teachers of music, namely, Bertha Cook, who taught music in the Fielding Academy at Paris, Idaho, and later trained the winning male quartet for the Church finals

of the M. I. A. contests held in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City; and Aurilia Cook, as violin soloist, who is now Aurilia Shrimmer, and is teaching violin in the McCune School of Music. William C. Hardy of Woodruff also took part; he later became leader of the Bountiful Ward choir, and for three successive years won the Davis Stake choir contest, and had the honor of having his choir appear in the Tabernacle at Salt Lake City and sing to the assembled saints. In appreciation of the services of this talented group of musicians, Thomas Blyth, the leading merchant of Evanston, banqueted them at the Presbyterian Church, where they also gave a short program to the assembled guests. Mr. Arthur Bowen of the Strand Theatre gave complimentary tickets to the choir and their friends to attend the picture show at the Strand Theatre, at Evanston.

CHAPTER XXIV

MORE STAKE ACTIVITIES

William Bell was ordained a Bishop and set apart to preside over the Cumberland Ward, August 5, 1905.

Hilliard branch was disorganized Jan. 5, 1906.

Eliza McFarlane was released as president of the Stake Primary Associations Oct. 24, 1906, on account of moving away, and Mina A. Guild was chosen as her successor. We were sorry to lose Sister McFarlane as she was a very efficient stake officer.

David McMillian was released as the Bishop of the Kemmerer Ward Oct. 8, 1906, on account of moving from the stake.

William Bell was released as Bishop of Cumberland Ward January 27, 1907, and George F. Wilde appointed to succeed him with Henry T. Williams and Willam J. Starkey as counsellors.

Kemmerer Ward was disorganized and attached to the Diamondville Ward Jan. 7, 1907.

Lyman meeting house was dedicated by Apostle Francis M. Lyman April 28, 1907.

June 20, 1907, was the seventieth birthday anniversary of my first counselor, Archibald McKinnon. This event was celebrated at Randolph. The event was attended by a great many of the officers of the Woodruff Stake, and some also came from the Bear Lake Stake to do honor to Pres. McKinnon. A program was arranged and many wonderful tributes were paid him for his faithful services in the stake. President McKinnon was my mother's brother. He embraced the Gospel in his youth in his native land, Scotland.

Ben. R. Brough, a faithful member of the High Council, died, Jan. 11, 1908. Bro. Brough had served as a member of the High Council since the organization of the stake in 1898—always true and faithful in the discharge of his duties.

The Oakley branch was organized Feb. 8, 1908, with John Jensen presiding.

The Milburne ward, formerly known as the Bridger Buttes Branch, was organized May 2, 1908, with Joseph Horrocks as Bishop.

Andrew Easton was released as Bishop of Diamondville Ward, June 13, 1908, on account of moving away, and John Stevenson was made Bishop of Diamondville Ward July 11, 1908.

Elkol Branch was organized July 18, 1908, with Laurance Berg as presiding Elder.

William J. Smith, a faithful member of the High Council who resided at Randolph died. Brother Smith was my wife's brother. The stake conference was held at Lyman at the same time and the funeral of Brother Smith was not held until after the conference, to enable us to attend the funeral which was to be held at Randolph. During this conference, a terrific storm arose. After the close of the evening meeting, those who desired to return home held a conference to decide, whether to wait until morning, or go to Carter, the railway station, that evening in the storm, Carter being eleven miles distant. The storm was still raging and it was very dark. Some were in favor of facing the storm and others in favor of remaining in Lyman all night. I was very anxious to get home to attend my brother-in-law's funeral, so I decided that I would go and the others could please themselves; then they all decided to go. It took four teams to take our company to the station. They were soon

ready, and we made a start. The visiting brethren from Salt Lake were taken in a light buggy and got started first. When I got in the rig in which I was to ride—a white top which was loaded to its capacity—the teamster said: “If you want to face this storm in the dark, you had better drive;” so I took the lines and we started. We were the middle outfit. It was an awful night, the wind blowing, the rain coming down in torrents, and so dark that we could scarcely see the horses, only when the lightning flashed. The horses kept in the road pretty well, but we had to drive very slow. The water was running in the road, and the only way by which we could tell that we were in the road, was by the splashing of the horses’ feet. We got along until we got into the hills, about two miles from Carter Station, when the rig ahead of us got off the road and tipped over, and the horses ran away. In that two-seated rig Pres. Thomas J. Tingey, Bishop James Brown, Peter McKinnon, George A. Neville and Joseph A. Quibell were riding besides the driver. Brother Quibell was thrown a distance from the rig and was found unconscious. Bishop Brown fell between the buggy and the wheel and was dragged for a distance with the wheel revolving, scraping his face, shoulder and arms. When he got loose, he was an awful sight, covered with mud, his face bleeding and his clothing torn. His hat was smashed and his arm was thought to be broken. Brother Quibell was restored to consciousness, and it was found that while he was quite seriously injured there were no bones broken. The other passengers and the driver were not seriously injured. The team that ran away came in contact with the rig that had taken the Salt Lake visitors to the station, and was returning. They struck the front wheel of this rig and mashed it to pieces, throwing the driver out, but he was not hurt. We got those who were injured the most into

my rig, and the others walked behind through the mud clinging on to the rig as best they could. In this way we reached Carter. We waited and listened for the wagon that was still behind us, which was a very large one, and filled with people, including Pres. McKinnon, Sister Conneley from Salt Lake City, representing the General Board of the Y. L. M. I. A., Bishop Brown's wife and daughter and a number of others. When the train arrived, the Salt Lake brethren and some others went on their way, while some of us waited to see what had become of the other people. Just after daylight, the other wagon came up to the station, all was well, and the people were in good spirits. Their team had left the road about five miles out of Lyman and got out into the hills. When they discovered that they were lost, they drew down the covers to keep out the storm and sat there until daylight. They passed the night cracking jokes, singing songs, and were not a bit the worse off for their experience. We then went in search of the run-away team. We found the horses about two miles from where they had started with the lines tangled in the sagebrush. The rig was right side up and Brother McKinnon's satchel, in which he carried his records (for he was stake clerk), was still there and unharmed. We then boarded the train and all returned to Evanston.

After returning home I went to Randolph and attended the funeral of William J. Smith, which was postponed until my return.

The Woodruff Ward was reorganized with George A. Neville as Bishop Aug. 2, 1908.

The Manila Branch was reorganized August 20, 1908, with Charles F. Olsen as presiding Elder.

Almy Branch was reorganized Sept. 1, 1908, with James Blight as presiding Elder.

The Manila Ward was reorganized with Willis Twitchell as Bishop in 1909.

The Elkol Branch was reorganized June 27, 1909, with Wallace Craigan as presiding Elder.

James Graham was released and William Stringer was appointed to preside over the Mountain View Branch July 17, 1909.

While Pres. McKinnon and I were filling an appointment at Diamondville, a messenger came in during the meeting and informed Pres. McKinnon that his daughter Sarah had been shot, and that he must return home at once. We got our team and left as soon as possible, as the message did not say whether she had been killed or not, there was a great deal of anxiety upon our minds. We were fifty miles from Randolph. When we arrived at the home of Pres. McKinnon, we found his daughter alive, but in a very critical condition. The shooting of Sarah, happened in this way. She was on her way to Sunday school, when, passing a house, a boy about twelve years old, who was standing by the building with a shot gun in his hands, raised the gun and deliberately shot her. When asked why he did it, he answered, "Just for fun." The shots entered her back and some of them pierced her lungs. Suffering with great pain and having great difficulty in breathing, she laid in this condition for a week.

A stake conference was held at Randolph, attended by Apostle Orson F. Whitney. Pres. McKinnon sent for Brother Whitney and me to come and administer to Sarah. I anointed her and Brother Whitney sealed the anointing and blessed her, with the promise that the pain should leave her, and that she would recover. After he took his hands from her head, the pain ceased, and she never had another pain, but continued to recover until she was entirely well

again. Sarah was a member of the Stake Relief Society Board, was a very talented singer and acted as chorister of the Stake Relief Societies. Later, she married Joseph Smith, a son of Apostle John Henry Smith, and bore him two sons. She died in Salt Lake City, Utah. Apostle Whitney and I were the speakers at her funeral. I had known Sarah all her life, and a sweeter dispositioned child than she was could scarcely be imagined. Everybody loved her, and it was a great loss to the stake when she married and went to live in Salt Lake City.

Sarah Tyson was released as president of the Relief Societies of the stake May 6, 1911, on account of moving away; Phoebe A. Brough was chosen as her successor. Sister Tyson was a faithful and efficient officer in the stake. While out with me in the stake on one occasion, riding in a white-topped buggy, she got her neck twisted in some way in going through a gully in the road. She never recovered from this accident, but had a stiff neck all the rest of her life.

The High Priests Quorum was reorganized Aug. 27, 1911, and Joseph B. Martin was made president.

Evanston was made the headquarters of the Woodruff Stake April 12, 1912. So the stake grew and the membership increased. There was so much travelling for me to do that I could not give my store business the attention that it required. So I sold out to Henry H. Cook, bought a bunch of cows and went into the dairy business. We were quite successful in this business, but it was largely due to the efforts and good management of my wife, for I was out in the stake a good deal of my time.

The Manila Branch was again reorganized in December, 1912, with Charles F. Olsen placed in as presiding Elder.

Bishop George A. Neville was released as Bishop of the

Woodruff Ward March 22, 1913, on account of moving away, and Thomas J. Tingey, jun., succeeded him as the Bishop of Woodruff Ward.

George A. Peart was honorably released as superintendent of Sunday schools of the Stake on account of ill health, March 22, 1914, and Ernest G. Burdett was chosen to succeed him. Brother Peart was very faithful and success-



GEORGE A. PEART

ful in his labors; the Sunday schools in the whole stake flourished under his leadership. He was a member of the first Sunday school organized in the Church under the leadership of Richard Ballantyne, in 1849, and an officer in the Fourteenth Ward Sunday school, when Pres. George Q. Cannon

acted as superintendent. After moving to Randolph, Bro. Peart acted as superintendent of the Randolph Sunday School; for twenty years he was never once absent or late, although about three years of that time he lived seven miles from town and had to travel to town with a team.

Charles F. Olsen was released as presiding Elder of the Manila Branch June 4, 1914, and Daniel Nelson sustained to succeed him.

The Y. L. M. I. A. Stake Board was reorganized July 12, 1914, and Dorothy McKinnon was chosen as president.

At a stake conference and home-coming held July 25 and 26, 1914, the Randolph Tabernacle was dedicated. On that occasion there were present Apostle George Albert Smith, and his wife (a daughter of Wilford Woodruff, jun., who lived at Randolph, when she was a little girl), her father, Wilford Woodruff, jun., also Elias S. Woodruff, who was born at Randolph. They, with the following old settlers, spoke of their early experience in the settlement of Randolph: Lorenzo Young, of St. Charles, Ida.; Samuel Henderson, of Laketown; William H. Lee, of Woodruff; George A. Peart, Archibald McKinnon, and others. Sister Smith wore a calico dress, the material of which was bought out of a store at Randolph, thirty-seven years before. Bishop Lorenzo W. Stohl of Brigham City, who was present at the conference, also spoke of his experience in pioneer life.

The Randolph Tabernacle was dedicated by Apostle George Albert Smith. Bishop John C. Gray was the architect and builder of this structure. He assisted in every part of the building from the foundation to the finish. With companies of men he went into the mountains to cut the trees, and took the logs to the mill and sawed the lumber. He also made a large book case, a pulpit, a sacrament table in the

building, and supervised the whole structure from beginning to finish, doing a great deal of this work without remuneration. Bishop Gray was a wonderful man. From his early boyhood in his native land (Scotland) he was active in the Church, and all through his life held prominent positions. He was a teacher of righteousness, was well informed and a very useful man, but unfortunately met with a very serious accident which nearly took his life and unbalanced his mind. Bishop Gray never recovered from his accident; after a long period of illness he died at his home in Randolph, and was buried May 15, 1932. At his funeral the tabernacle was filled to capacity with people who had come from far and near to pay their last respects to this great man.

The Randolph Tabernacle cost \$23,779. Of this amount the people subscribed \$16,452, strangers \$511, and the Church the balance.

CHAPTER XXV

ACQUIRING A FAMILY.—OTHER STAKE ACTIVITIES

My wife and I were not blessed with a family of our own, but there never was a time in our lives when we did not have children in our home. Phebe Peart came to us at the



JOHN NEILSON, NELLIE, REX AND MARY

time of our marriage, and remained with us until she was married. Then came Moroni and Gilbert Smith, nephews of my wife; still later came Fred Smith, a brother to the other boys. Nellie Rex came to us when nine years old,

after the death of her mother, my wife's sister, and remained with us until after her marriage.

Shortly after the stake was organized Joseph T. Cutler of Kemmerer was called on a mission. Having a boy Joseph, Jun., about 12 years of age, he said he could not go on a mission and leave this boy; so I told him that I would take care of the boy until his return. He was a wayward boy, and we had quite a time with him, but succeeded in getting him pretty well under control before his father's return, and he

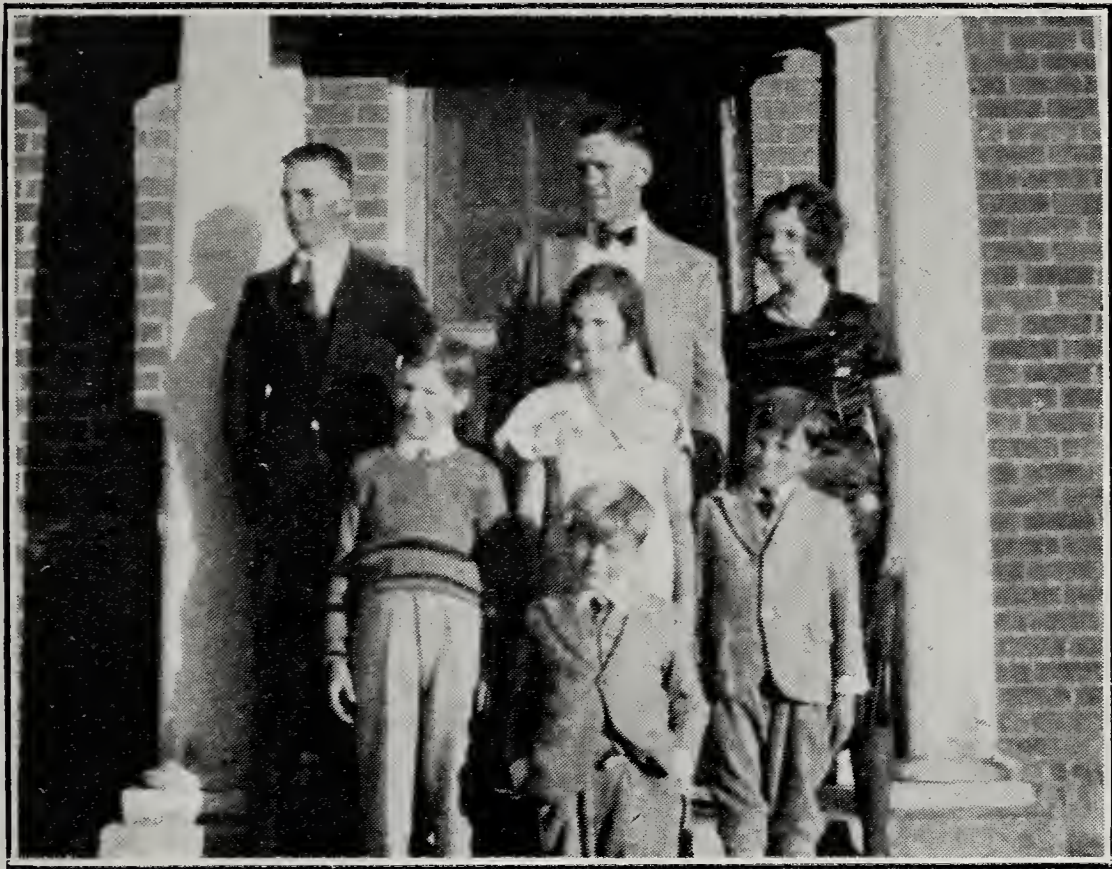


EZRA BROWN, JUN., NETTIE AND CHILDREN

remained with us for another year. When he was grown, he joined the U. S. Navy. After he was discharged he got married, and he and his wife traveled hundreds of miles to visit us. On that occasion he expressed to us his thankfulness for the teachings he had received while in our home,

and acknowledged what great influence for good it had had upon his life.

J. Sidney Sim, the son of a friend who lived in Bear Lake Valley, came to live with us when he was about 12 years old. And while he was only with us a year or more, has always expressed his gratitude for the teachings he received while living



ROBERT NEILSON AND FAMILY

with us. Sidney grew up, performed an honorable mission, and on returning was married. He now has a nice little family and is active in the organizations of the Church.

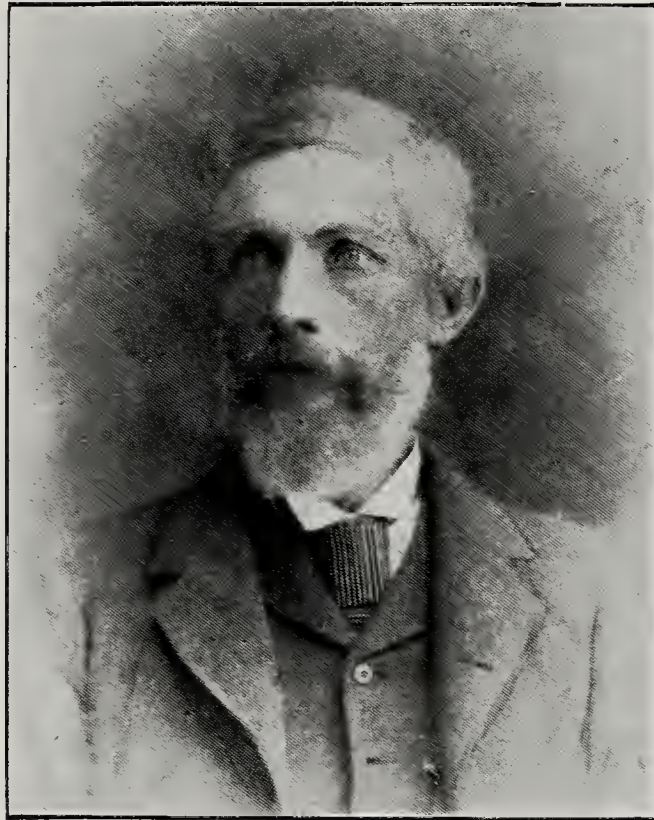
After the death of their mother, Robert and Nettie Neilson came to us. Robert was 11 and Nettie nine years of age, and both remained with us until after they were married. These two children were talented singers and sang very beautifully together ; they were prominent in school cantatas and in

the ward choir. While in Woodruff, Robert acted as president of the Y. M. M. I. A., and became a force to create activity among the boys of the town. He is still very active in choir and glee club work, is in the presidency of the Second Quorum of Elders in the Evanston Ward, and has a very fine family of splendid children. Nettie is the mother of seven children, and is now active in the work of the Evanston ward choir. Because of her kind and affable disposition she is loved by all who know her. All of these children, and their children, are very dear to us, and seem to us as our very own, and we are very grateful in our declining years that they came into our lives bringing love, joy, youth and companionship.

In December, 1914, I was presented with a gold watch, chain and locket by the Woodruff Stake Primary Officers, which I value very much.

Archibald McKinnon, my uncle and first counselor in the stake presidency, died at Randolph April 22, 1915. His funeral was held in connection with the stake conference which was held on the 24th and 25th of April at Randolph. Pres. McKinnon was like a father to me when I was a child, and I grew up under his care and instruction. In my young manhood he was my Bishop and directed my spiritual activities. When I became a man, my uncle and I became companions, and were very much attached to each other. When I was chosen as Bishop of the Woodruff Ward we became more closely associated than ever. We travelled together to conferences in the Bear Lake Stake and discussed the problems of our respective wards together. With our unity and affection the people of Randolph and Woodruff became very closely united. When I was called to be the president of the Woodruff Stake, he was still Bishop of Randolph Ward, and

fully sustained me as his president. Nothing of any importance was done in the Randolph Ward, in which I was not consulted. When Pres. Byron Sessions was released as my counselor, uncle was chosen to succeed him and continued in that position until his death. Pres. McKinnon was faithful until the last moment of his life. He never shirked



ARCHIBALD MCKINNON

any duty that was required of him at any time. He was wise in council, kind to every one, honest in his dealings with his fellow-man, strict in obedience to all the commandments of God, and devoted all his life freely to the service of the Lord. The speakers at his funeral were Apostle Heber J. Grant, Pres. Joseph W. McMurrin, George A. Peart, Bishop John Kennedy and John Snowball. Many beautiful floral offerings, and many manifestations of esteem were tendered this good man.

On July 24 and 25, 1915, at a stake conference, held at Lyman, Bishop James Brown of the Evanston Ward was chosen as second counselor in the stake presidency, Pres. Thos. J. Tingey being advanced to the position of first counselor. Bishop Brown officiated as Bishop of the Evanston Ward for thirty-three years, and had become very much endeared to the hearts of the people. When he was taken away from them as their Bishop, they were very much grieved, and a few of them rose up in opposition to his release. At this conference the Lyman Ward chapel was dedicated by Apostle Anthony W. Ivins.

Percy G. Matthews was sustained as Bishop of the Evanston Ward, Aug. 13, 1915.

Bishop Samuel R. Brough was released as Bishop of the Lyman Ward March 10, 1916, and H. Melvin Rollins sustained as his successor. Bishop Brough had acted as Bishop of the Lyman Ward since its organization, and had been a wonderful Bishop. He was instrumental in founding the town of Lyman, which was located on his homestead, and he gave it over to the people for a townsite, and sold the lots at a reasonable price. He was a leader in all the public enterprises in the early settlement of Bridger Valley, and through his advice, and often with his means, assisted many in getting homes in that valley. At one time he had lumber and other material on the ground to build him a home, but let it all go to the building of a meeting house. He was a very hard working man and successful in his financial affairs. As an example of his obedience to the Priesthood I will relate a little incident. In company with Pres. Tingey I was on my way to Manila, when we called at Lyman and found Bishop Brough in the midst of his harvest. He was standing on a wheat stack, stacking grain from four or five wagons,

with the perspiration streaming down his face. I looked up to him and said, "Bishop, we are going to Manila and would like to have you accompany us." He said, "Well, you see how I am situated, but if you say 'go,' I will go." When I said "go," he climbed down off the stack, put another man in his place and accompanied us to Manila, which trip took us three days. This incident expressed the sterling qualities of Bishop Brough. Carl G. Youngberg, one of Bishop Brough's counselors, also made this trip with us. This young man being very active was a splendid support, and took a vigorous part in every enterprise and activity in the Lyman ward.

October 26, 1916, James Brown, sen., and Andrew Easton were ordained Patriarchs by Apostle George F. Richards.

October 13, 1916, Heber Bennion, jun., was made presiding Elder of the Manila Branch.

Peter McKinnon was released as stake clerk, October 27, 1917, on account of moving away, after having acted as clerk for thirteen years, and had given efficient service in this office. On Oct. 27, 1917, John Neilson was appointed stake clerk, to succeed Bro. McKinnon.

About this time the stake presidency decided to make application to the general authorities of the Church for a stake office building, where we might have a home for the stake officers, when they met at Evanston. The stake headquarters were already there and all stake meetings were being held there. The stake officers, after driving from their homes to Evanston, had no place to rest or prepare for meetings; and so I went to Salt Lake City and laid the matter before the Presidency of the Church. This led to arrangements being made for the construction of a stake office building in Evanston. The plans were drawn by a firm of Salt Lake

architects, and the stake presidency was given full charge for the location and construction of the building. When finished it was a very comfortable building suitable for all the needs of the stake officers. Its erection cost \$11,000, including furnishings. This was all paid for by the Church.

Diamondville Ward was reorganized April 22, 1917, with William J. Jensen, as Bishop.

April, 1918, John C. Gray was released as Bishop of the Randolph Ward and George A. Peart, Jun., was sustained as Bishop in his stead. Elder Gilbert Taysom was sustained as the Bishop of the Kemmerer Ward.

John B. Young was sustained as Bishop of Rock Springs Ward June 23, 1918.

Thomas J. Tingey, first counselor in the stake presidency, died at the Dee Hospital at Ogden, Utah, July 16, 1918, following an operation for hernia. He was stricken while at his home at Woodruff, and after administering an anesthetic the local doctor tried to relieve him, but was unsuccessful. We then took him to Evanston, where three other doctors were also unsuccessful in relieving his condition. We then took him to the Dee Hospital, where an operation was performed after which he lingered about ten days, and then passed away. I was with him during his entire illness. Pres. Tingey who thus died, in the prime of life, was a strong, vigorous man, and a very faithful officer in the Woodruff Stake. In all his work as stake clerk, as counselor in the stake presidency and in many other positions of trust that he held, he was thorough in all that could be desired. He was honest, chaste, true and reliable, was never known to shrink a duty or a responsibility and was always willing to do more than his share for the public good. He was indeed

a wonderful asset to the Woodruff Stake of Zion and a great support to me as the president of the stake.

George A. Neville was set apart to act as second counselor in the presidency of the Woodruff Stake July 18, 1918. James Brown, sen., being advanced to the position of first counselor in the stake presidency. They were set apart by Apostle Heber J. Grant at Kemmerer, Wyo.

Ephraim Harris was released as president of the Hilliard



THOS. J. TINGEY

Branch Sept. 22, 1918, and Joseph M. Martin was sustained as his successor.

Joseph Kilburn was ordained a Bishop and set apart to

preside over the Milburne Ward June 8, 1919. Archibald Pulham was appointed to preside over the Mountain Home branch July 7, 1919.

At a conference held at Lyman July 26, 1919, Sister Clarissa Beebe was present. Sister Beebe, who is a daughter of late Pres. Wilford Woodruff, had in her possession a handkerchief, which was given to her father by the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1839 when there was so much sickness among the Saints at Commerce, Ill. A certain brother had a pair of twins who were very low, and he sent for the Prophet Joseph Smith. He being unable to go himself, gave to Bro. Woodruff this handkerchief and told him to wrap the handkerchief around the heads of the sick children, and they would recover. Bro. Woodruff did as he was told, and the twins were immediately healed. It was quite an honor to see and handle this historic handkerchief.

Harold R. Harrison was sustained as Bishop of Kemmerer Ward July 26, 1919.

The members of the Woodruff Stake took an outing to Bear Lake Aug. 21, 1919. They had a very enjoyable time, and the trip had a tendency to stimulate the people in the discharge of their spiritual duties.

In August, 1919, I moved to Evanston, Wyoming, which had been made the headquarters of the stake. All the stake meetings were held there and the stake had grown so large that it took a great deal of my time on the road. I either had to move to Evanston, or give up my position as president of the stake, and so I decided to move to Evanston, where I bought a home, and also a small ranch of 120 acres at Almy, six miles north of Evanston, on Bear River. John Nielsen, who had been with us since 1898, and who had married our girl, Nellie, also moved up with us, and lived

on the ranch about a year. Then they adopted a little baby boy, after which it was not convenient for them to live on the ranch, as Bro. Neilson was now employed in the Store Department of the Union Pacific Railroad Co., at Evanston. With my wife I then moved out on to the ranch.

Sister Louie McKinnon was released as president of the Primary Associations of the stake Oct. 15, 1920, on account of moving from the stake to make their home in Ogden, Utah. She was a very splendid stake officer, beloved by the officers and children of the Primary Associations. Sister Nel-



RESIDENCE OF JOHN M. BAXTER, EVANSTON

lie Neilson, who had been Sister McKinnon's first counselor for a number of years, was chosen as stake president of Primary Associations, to succeed Sister McKinnon.

Zina Taggart was released as president of the Stake Relief Societies, Oct. 29, 1921, on account of moving to Salt Lake City. Sister Taggart was a very efficient president, and the Relief Societies flourished under her administration. Sister Esther Thomas was appointed to succeed her in that position.

George A. Peart, jun., was released as Bishop of the Randolph Ward June 14, 1922, and Oluf Larson was chosen as his successor.

The name of the Mountain Home Branch was changed to McKinnon, Sept. 8, 1922, in honor of Pres. Archibald McKinnon. On one of our trips to Manila, Bro. McKinnon and I camped on the spot where the McKinnon Ward is now located. He said to me: "John, you will see the day when there will be a settlement of Latter-day Saints on this spot." A few years later, this prediction was literally fulfilled. He little thought then, however, that the settlement would be named after him.

The Green River Branch was organized March 9, 1923, with Albert Manwaring as presiding Elder.

The following is a brief account of a celebration or "home-coming," which took place in Evanston in June, 1922:

Bygone Days

"Those sweet old days," come and renew.

With friends that are staunch and true,

Who cherished the thoughts that blossomed and bloomed

In our souls, planted by you.

Ida V. Mills.

Our Motto:
"It Shall Be Done"

HOME COMING
Woodruff Stake Officers
Celebrating the
Twenty-fourth Anniversary
of the Organization
of the Woodruff Stake
JUNE 5 AND 6, 1922
at Evanston, Wyoming

May the lessons of loyalty to the truth, steadfastness to duty, and wholesome pleasure, exemplified in the lives of the pioneer officers of our stake, be an incentive to the present officers to efficiently carry on the work they so nobly began.

—*Violet Gerrard.*

This "Home Coming" of the officers of the Woodruff Stake was held at Evanston, to celebrate the 24th anniversary of the organization of the stake. The program was devoted largely to reminiscences of early days and paying tribute to the original officers who had passed away, namely:

Pres. Archibald McKinnon and Thomas J. Tingey, counselors in the stake presidency.

William H. Lee, William G. Burton, and George Eyre, Patriarchs.

Lucy F. Grant and Sarah Tyson, presidents of Relief Societies.

Ida B. Fowkes and Mina A. Guild, presidents of Primary Associations.

John Guild, Religion Class supervisor.

Joseph Soulsby, James Graham, Hans Jensen, Henry T.

Williams, Samuel Kiddy, John Stevenson and Gilbert Taysom, Bishops, and others.

All these people were spoken of in fond remembrance.

Many of the pioneer officers of the stake who had moved away returned on this occasion, and joined in giving their experience in the early days of the stake. We were also honored by the presence of Pres. Heber J. Grant, wife and daughter, Joseph Anderson, private secretary to the President, and his wife.

CHAPTER XXVI

A TRIP TO CALIFORNIA

On Jan. 8, 1924, my wife and I left Evanston on a visit to California. This was the first trip we had made together to remain away for any length of time since we were married. On account of the store, postoffice and dairy, it was impossible for both of us to go at the same time, so this was a real honeymoon for us about forty-five years after our marriage. We went to Long Beach, California, in company with my wife's brother "Ike" Smith of Randolph. Another brother James Smith of St. Anthony, Ida., was already there with his wife and four grown-up daughters. They met us at the train on our arrival and had a fine dinner prepared for us at their apartment. James Smith and his family had spent their winters at Long Beach for the past twenty-three years. They had a very fine apartment—brand new and facing the ocean—occupying one-half of the building. The other half was not quite finished, that is, not all the furnishings were in place. We made application for the other apartments and the owners completed the furnishing for us. It was quite expensive, but it was beautiful, and the door, being just across the hall from the Smiths, made it very convenient for us to visit with each other. This was a real treat to my wife, for she had not met her brother and his wife for many years, and did not know any of his family. The girls could not do too much to make it pleasant for their Aunt Agnes. They had an automobile and took us for rides to the beaches, through the orange groves, etc. One day, while strolling down the pike, I was looking at a shop window, when some one came

up behind me and slapped me on the back. I turned, and a man said, "Don't you know me?" I said, "No, I do not." "Well," said he, "I know you, I used to buy goods at your store at Woodruff." He told me his name was Joe Alston, but even then I did not know him any better. I did not remember that I had ever seen him before. He said, "Say, how would you like to go on a battle ship?" I said, "It



AT LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

Left to right: James Smith, Agnes Smith Baxter,
and "Ike" (Isaac) Smith

would be the greatest thing I could wish for, I never saw a battle ship; in fact, I never saw the ocean until now, and all my life I've had a desire to see a battle ship." "Well," said he, "The 'Louisiana,' one of the largest ships of the Navy, will be here in a few days. I have a relative, who is an officer on the ship, and will be glad to take you on the battle

ship." I gave him my address and he said he would call for me when the ship pulled into the harbor. This was a very remarkable thing, that an entire stranger should in this way gratify a desire that I had so longed for.

In a few days the battle ship came in and anchored out in the ocean, about seven miles from San Pedro harbor. The next morning early Mr. Alston called, and we took a boat to San Pedro. When we arrived there, we saw some sailors in a boat at the U. S. landing. We went to them and asked if they were going out to the battle ship. They said they were going in a few minutes and they would be glad to take us with them. They said they had to load some films for a picture show, and that we might get in the boat and go around with them to where they were going to load them. While they were loading the films, one of the sailors slipped and let one fall into the water. He said, "Now we will have to get a diving suit and get that out." I was in hopes that I might see them go down in the diving suit. A ship had just come into the harbor, which had sailed around the world, and was flying the flags of every nation. As it was only going to remain an hour in San Pedro, the sailors asked if we would like to see it. We assured them that we would. They took us around to where the ship was anchored and all around it; and to me this was a wonderful sight. We then went to the battle ship and got on board. There were 820 men on the ship. After a little time, we found the officer mentioned by Mr. Alston, and I was introduced to him as the president of the Woodruff Stake, and my friend told him that as I had never seen a battle ship before would like to go over it. The officer happened to be a "Mormon" boy, and when he learned that I was president of a stake, he took great interest in me and showed me every possible courtesy. He had some

business to attend to and said, if we would wait a few minutes, he would be with us and show us over the ship. He first took us up to the top—to the telescope, and said it would be nice for us to see a ship out at sea, but he did not think there was one in sight. He looked, and sure enough he found a ship away out on the ocean. This was a great sight to me. I do not know how far away it was, but I could see it quite plainly through this telescope. He then took us down and showed us the guns and explained just how they were operated. They are kept covered, when not in use, but he took one of the covers off from a gun, manipulated it and showed how they got the range, and swung it round, raised and lowered it. Although it weighed many tons, he manipulated it with perfect ease. We then visited the officers' rooms, reading rooms and picture show; next we saw the bake ovens, where bread for 820 men is baked. He also showed us a machine for peeling potatoes, the place where they shovelled potatoes into the machine and where they were peeled, washed and dumped into some large kettles, ready for cooking. We were also shown many other cooking devices, and the refrigerator, where they made their ice, and the great electric ranges, where they did their cooking. Then we went down to the bottom of the ship, where we saw the great boilers and all the machinery. To me this was a wonderful sight. It took us a full half day to go over the ship.

When we were ready to leave, the sailors took us in a boat, and sure enough the diving suit was in the boat, they were to use it to get the films which had fallen into the ocean. On the shoes of this suit there were lead soles about two inches thick. We saw them go down and bring up the films, and again my wishes were realized. After landing at San Pedro, we took passage on a boat to Long Beach, arriving

there after dark. This was one of the most interesting days of all my life.

A few days after my visit to the battle ship, Sister Wesley K. Walton, of Los Angeles, phoned us that she would like us to pay her a visit; and if we would come the following day, she would send an automobile for us. The car came next morning and took us to Sister Walton's home. She was very pleased to see us and entertained us royally. After dinner she had her son-in-law take us for a ride. He was a native of the city and was well acquainted with all places of interest. We visited the Chinese Gardens, Beverly Hills, Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, the movie studios, the home of Douglas Fairbanks, and many other homes of movie stars, the race course at Culver City, etc. We had a wonderful day and returned to the home of Sister Walton, where the girls had a splendid supper awaiting us.

A day or two later we received a letter from Mrs. Fred Carruth, a friend of ours, who had lived at Evanston, but who was now living at Glendale, Calif. She invited us to visit them, giving us minute directions, how to find them. We consequently paid them a visit. To say that she was pleased to meet us would hardly express it; she was more than pleased. After partaking of a wonderful dinner, they took us for a ride. I cannot tell just where we went, but we passed through Pasadena and viewed many homes belonging to millionaires, also the Sunken Gardens, and many other sights of interest.

A few days later we took a steamer for Catalina Island. We were a nice little company, including the Smiths, some of our friends from Evanston and our friends from Glendale. After traveling to San Pedro by electric train, we boarded the ship "Avalon." The ocean was perfectly calm, and we

had a lovely trip to the Island. There was music and dancing on board, and the day was beautiful. When we arrived at Catalina Island, we boarded a glass-bottomed boat and saw the wonderful formations in the bottom of the ocean. There were fish of every description and color. After spending an hour or two in this way, we landed on the island, ate lunch and saw many of the wonderful sights. We then returned to the mainland, having passed another splendid day.

Soon after this visit to Catalina Island, Nellie Shriber, eldest daughter of James Smith, who was working in the Bank of Italy at Long Beach, took us out for a drive. We went out into Orange County among the orange groves to Santa Ana and many miles out in the country. We had our photos taken under the orange trees and in the park at Santa Ana. It was a lovely day and we enjoyed our trip very much. Mrs. A. G. Rex, who was visiting in California, also procured a car, took us out riding, and entertained us at dinner. We were astonished at the number of friends we found in California, and the attention they gave to us, in taking us out for drives to all the beach resorts, and to shows, etc. Our stay was a continual round of pleasure, and we enjoyed every minute of it. But, unfortunately, we were called home on account of the death of my wife's brother-in-law, Alfred G. Rex, of Evanston; and although 45 years passed before my wife and I had a honeymoon, we had a real one on this trip.

After remaining at Evanston for about two weeks, we went to Salt Lake City where we stayed about a month.

CHAPTER XXVII

BUILDING MONUMENTS TO THE PIONEERS

The Kemmerer Ward was reorganized June 4, 1924, with John McPhie as Bishop.

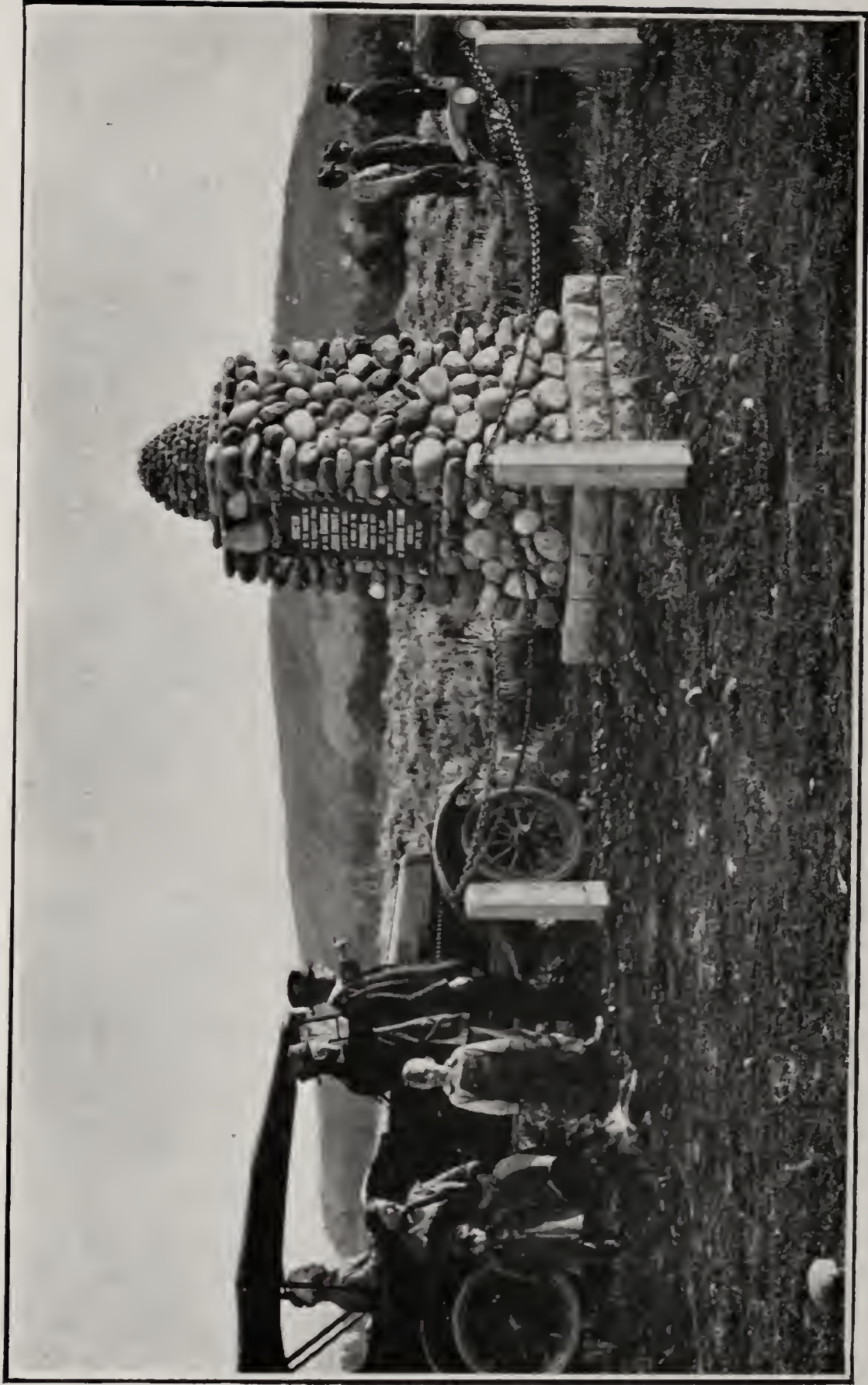
Heber Bennion, Jun., was released as presiding Elder of the Manila branch June 19, 1924, and Charles F. Olsen appointed to preside in his stead.

The Reliance Branch was organized July 19, 1924, with William J. Wilson as presiding Elder.

In the fall of 1924, I accompanied Elder Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, over the Pioneer Trail from Pacific Springs in Wyoming, to the Utah-Wyoming Line. We followed the trail all the way except a few places that were fenced and the crossing of Green River which was not accessible. On this trip we had with us a photographer by the name of Geo. E. Anderson, who took pictures of scenes along the way.

A pageant depicting the coming of the pioneers was staged at Lyman, Wyo., Sept. 19, 1924, including the early trappers, the "Mormon" emigrants traveling with ox teams and hand carts, etc. It was a wonderful affair and reflected great credit upon those who had it in charge, and the people of Bridger Valley.

At a meeting of the stake presidency and High Council, it was decided to erect a monument on the Pioneer Trail in honor of the early pioneers of Utah. It was thought at first to place it on the Utah-Wyoming line, but, on investigation, a suitable place on the line could not be found, so it was decided to build it at the crossing of Bear River, at what is known as Myers' Crossing. It was erected on the hill just



PIONEER MONUMENT AT MYERS' CROSSING ON BEAR RIVER, WYOMING
Personnel: In Car: Agnes S. Baxter, Nellie R. Neilson with Mary and Rex, Pres. John M. Baxter, Andrew Jen-
son. On the right of monument: Andrew Funk, John Neilson and Geo. A. Neville.

east of the crossing, and was placed right in the middle of the "Old Trail." It was built of cobble rock and cement. The cobble rocks were taken from the side of the road, where the emigrants had thrown them. The monument was capped with a Bee Hive—a very pretty design. A bronze plate was placed on the monument with the following inscription upon it: "Erected by the members of the Woodruff Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in honor of the Pioneers who passed this spot, on July 12, 1847, under the leadership of Brigham Young. Dedicated Sept 28, 1924." A hollow box was placed in the monument, in which each person dropped a card with his or her name written thereon, and at the same time made their contribution toward the erection of the monument, which was 25 cents for adults and 5 cents for children—no more and no less—so that all contributed the same amount. The monu-



SUPPOSED GRAVE OF ARCHIBALD McPHAIL

Personnel, left to right: Andrew Jenson, John M. Baxter, Geo. A. Neville, Agnes S. Baxter, John Neilson with Rex, Andrew Funk and Nellie Neilson with Mary.

ment was dedicated Sept. 28, 1924. About 1,000 people were present at the dedication. They came from all parts of the Woodruff Stake, and among them were many friends who were not members of the Church. A number of people from Coalville, Summit Stake, and a few from Ogden and Salt Lake City also attended. Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson from Salt Lake City was in attendance, and was the principal speaker. I also spoke and William Rex of Randolph offered the dedicatory prayer. The Evanston Ward choir was present in full strength, under the leadership of John Nielsen, with Mrs. Ivar C. Butts at the organ, they having brought an organ from Evanston. Among the songs and anthems rendered on this occasion were the popular "Mormon" hymns, "Come, Come Ye Saints," "O Ye Mountains High," "In Our Redeemer's Name," and the "Hosanna Anthem."

After the service Senator Myers approached me overflowing with joy and gratitude saying, "This has been a wonderful day to me. I did not think that I would ever live to see this day. I well remember, when I was a boy, that on this same spot an Indian came riding as fast as his horse could carry him shouting, 'Cheyennes, Cheyennes, Cheyennes,' and that shortly afterwards a tribe of Indians came with their squaws and papooses, fleeing for their lives. Now contrast that scene with this wonderful gathering of people, and this great choir singing 'Glory to God in the Highest.' This is all most wonderful to me. Where I once heard the blood-curdling cry of the murderous Cheyennes, I hear to-day shouts of 'Hosanna.' "

Senator Myers is not a member of the Church, but his parents were among the early "Mormon" Pioneers who settled on Bear River, ten miles above Evanston.

The weather was ideal. It was late in the season, but nature seemed to smile in approval with the proceedings of the day. Ample means were contributed to pay all expenses for the erection of the monument, and no one was hurt, financially. Andrew Funk of Evanston was the architect and builder of this monument.

The Lyman High School building in the Lyman Ward was dedicated Nov. 19, 1924. The principal speaker on this occasion was Apostle Melvin J. Ballard of Salt Lake City, and I offered the dedicatory prayer. This is a wonderful school building for this part of the country, and would be a credit to any city. The Bridger Valley people are to be congratulated upon the construction of this splendid building. With the interest that the Lyman people have taken in education, there is no doubt that Lyman will become an educational center, similar to Logan, or Provo, in Utah.

Archibald Pulham was released as Bishop of the McKinnon Ward Dec. 3, 1924, and on the same date the Almy Branch was reorganized with Jared Bowns as presiding Elder.

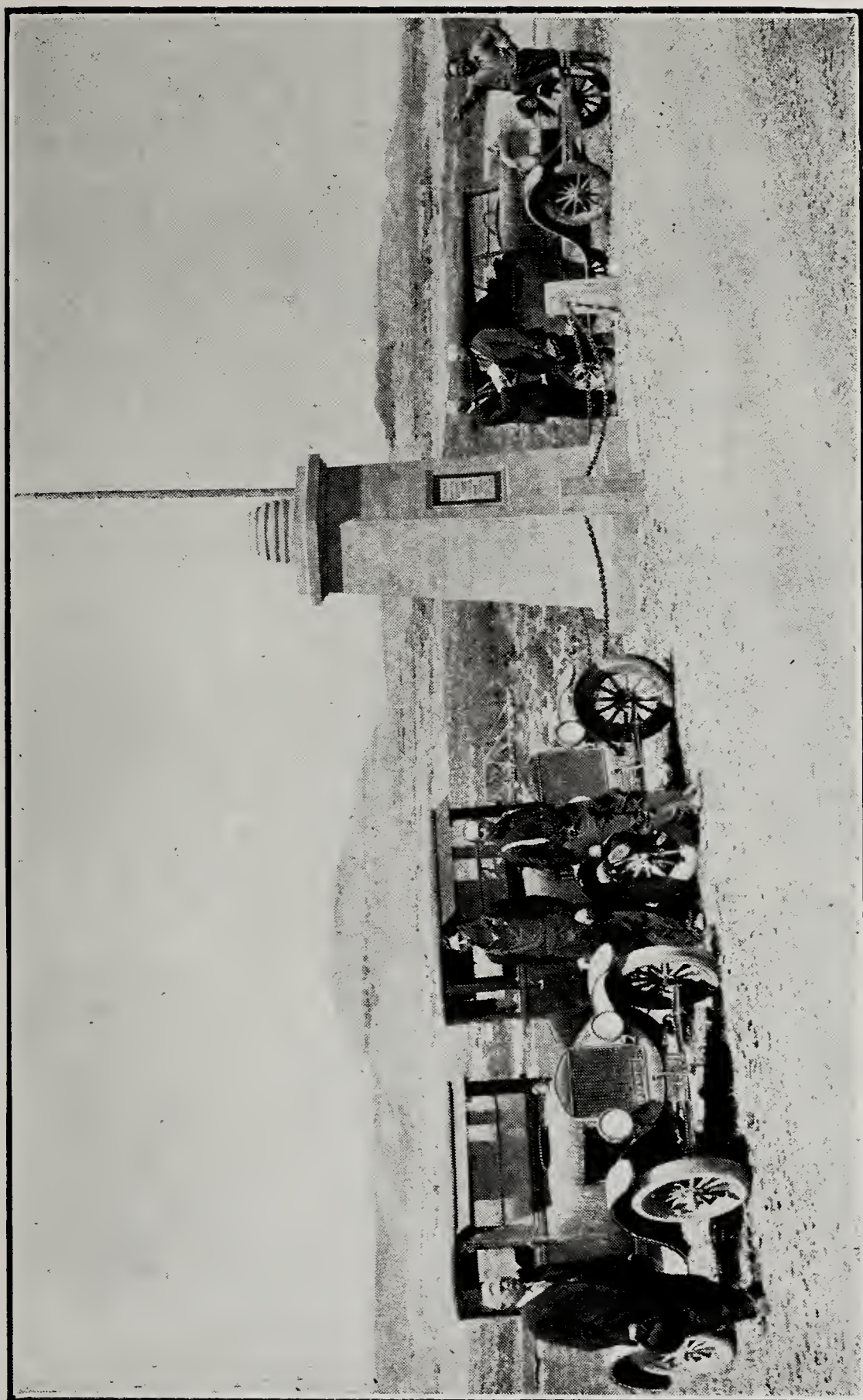
Ernest G. Burdett was released as stake superintendent of Sunday schools Feb. 19, 1925, and Hyrum W. Phillips was appointed his successor.

The McKinnon Ward was reorganized March 4, 1925, with Joseph A. Terry as Bishop.

Joseph Kilburne was appointed presiding Elder for the Reliance Branch July 10, 1925.

About this time another monument was erected on the Pioneer Trail, near the intersection of Black's Fork and Smith's Fork rivers, at a place known to the early emigrants as Millersville, about five miles east of Lyman. This monument is larger than the one erected on Bear River, and is

built of cement. It was dedicated in connection with the stake conference held at Lyman July 18 and 19, 1925. There were present on this occasion, Apostle Richard R. Lyman, representing the general authorities of the Church; Horace H. Cummings, former superintendent of Church schools; Mrs. Mary Conneley Kimball, Mrs. Annie Wells Cannon, and Afton Young, all from Salt Lake City and delegates to conference. One of the sessions was devoted to the dedication of the Pioneer Monument. People arrived at the place in automobiles, of which there were over two hundred on the ground. All pioneers present, who crossed the plains prior to the advent of the railroad, were given prominent seats. The program started with two selections by the High School band. The large congregation, under the direction of Stake Chorister John Nielsen sang, "O Ye Mountains High." John Kennedy of Argyle offered the invocation, followed by the song, "For the Strength of the Hills We Bless Thee." The singing was accompanied by Brother William Dean, stake organist on the organ, which was brought from Lyman, and by a brass quartet from Lyman. Bishop H. Melvin Rollins of Lyman, in a few well chosen words, explained the object of the celebration, and extended a hearty welcome to all assembled. The principal address was delivered by Bishop Albert Manwaring of Green River Ward. Bishop Manwaring has a striking and most pleasing personality, a splendid voice and unusual good delivery, and his address was well prepared. "The Pioneer," a song written by Professor Evan Stephens, was given by Elder John Neilson, with Sister Laura Butts at the organ as accompanist. Appropriate remarks were made by the five visitors from Salt Lake City, who expressed their thanks that they were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and also that



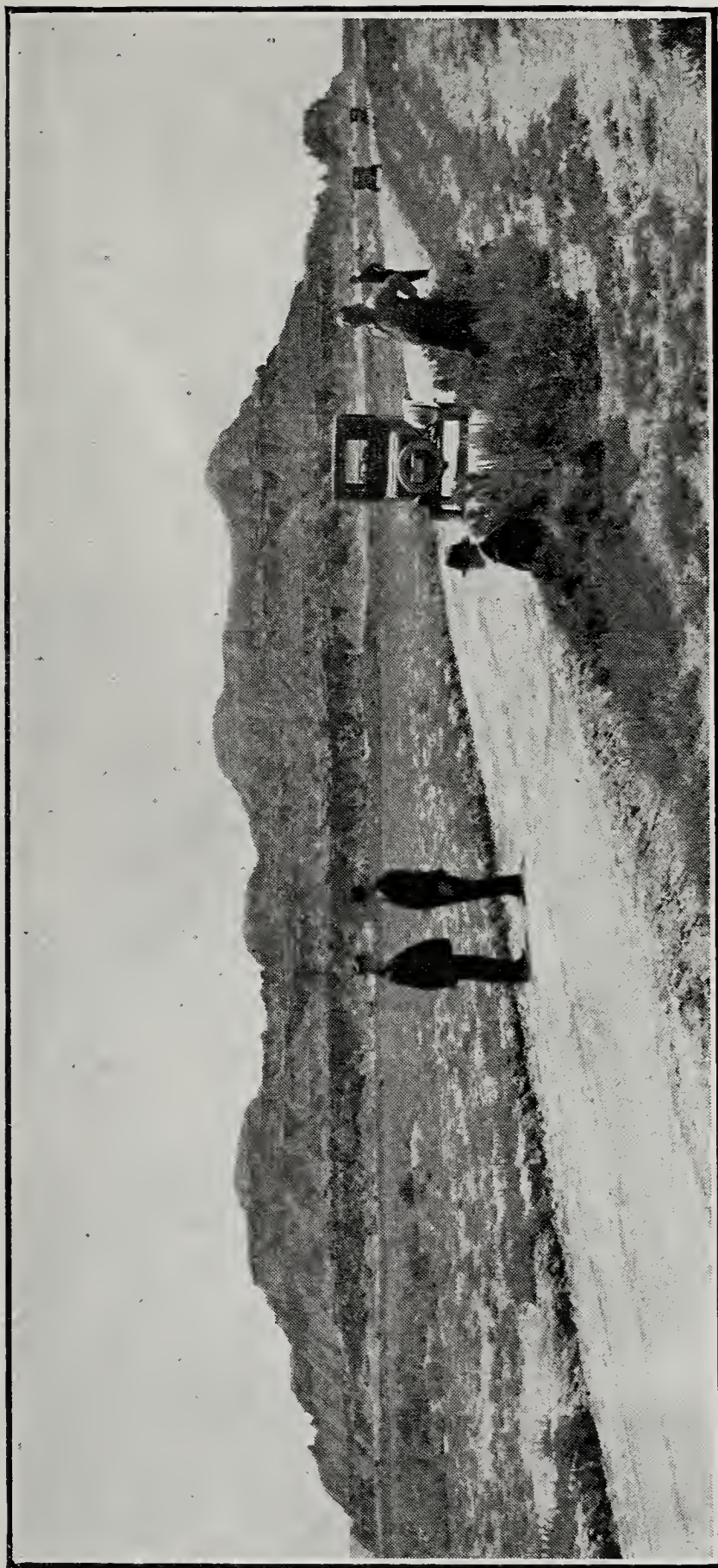
PIONEER MONUMENT, NEAR LYMAN, WYOMING
Left to right: Geo. A. Neville, Son of Bishop Rollins, Bishop Loraine Rollins, Andrew Jenson, John M. Baxter,
Wm. O. Stphens.

they were privileged to attend the dedication of this beautiful monument erected in honor of the Pioneers. At this point, contributions were taken to pay for the erection of the monument—25 cents for adults and 5 cents for children, each contributor had his or her name, address and age written on a card, which was deposited in the monument. This monument also had a bronze plate with an inscription similar to the monument previously erected on Bear River. The monument was then sealed, the congregation sang, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," and the dedicatory prayer was offered by myself.

The monument was designed by Andrew Funk and erected by Oscar Erickson. This monument and the one on Bear River were the first monuments erected on the Pioneer Trail by any stake in the Church.

Bishop Percy G. Matthews was released as the Bishop of the Evanston Ward Oct. 10, 1925, and Harold E. Brough was ordained an High Priest and Bishop and set apart to preside over the Evanston Ward by Apostle Melvin J. Ballard.

In conversation with Apostle David O. McKay, while en route from a conference held at Rock Springs Ward, the matter of a division of the Woodruff Stake was discussed, but no action was taken at that time. At a meeting of the stake officers held in Evanston July 17, 1926, Pres. James Brown, sen., said, that it had come to him like a dream of the night, that in the event that the stake was divided, which was quite likely to be the case, that the new stake should be called the "Baxter Stake," in honor of him who has given the best part of his life to the upbuilding of the Woodruff Stake of Zion, and the people residing therein for the past twenty-eight years. By right of service he is now the oldest stake presi-



CHURCH BUTTES ON THE PIONEER TRAIL, WYOMING

From left to right: John M. Baxter and Geo. A. Neville (standing); Andrew Jenson (sitting), and Wm. O. Stephens (standing).

dent in the Church. Pres. George A. Neville had made the same suggestion before, but not known to Pres. Brown. This matter was put to vote and unanimously sustained by the officers present. Then I said, "I will tell you the rest of it. I received a telephone message from Pres. Rudger Clawson, saying that at the next quarterly conference of the Woodruff Stake, the stake would be divided, and he desired me to select two men who would make good stake presidents." I answered, "Did you say 'two?'" He answered, "Yes, I said two. Was not that your own proposal?" I said, "Yes, that is quite agreeable to me."

At this time I received a letter from Andrew Jenson requesting that I meet him at Laramie, Wyo., and accompany him over the Pioneer trail to the Utah line. I wrote him that under the present condition it would be impossible, for me to meet him at Laramie, but would try to meet him at the eastern borders of the stake. It had been decided by the stake officers to erect a monument on the Pioneer Trail in that locality.

At a high council meeting held at Evanston July 9, 1926, on motion of George A. Neville, seconded by John Kennedy, and unanimously carried, that in case the visiting brethren were not instructed with a name for the new Stake, that it be named the "Baxter Stake," in honor of Pres. Baxter. It was also agreed that it be placed on record that this High Council assembled at this time do not desire any change in the stake presidency.

On Friday July 16, 1926, Apostle Rudger Clawson and Richard R. Lyman arrived at Randolph, to attend the stake conference to be held Saturday and Sunday July 17 and 18, 1926. On Friday evening a meeting was called by the brethren of the stake presidency and clerk. Elder Clawson

said that the object of the meeting was to consider the division of the stake, as suggested by Pres. Baxter, and wished the stake presidency and clerk to express themselves freely. They all favored the division of the stake; then on motion of Pres. Clawson the vote was unanimous in favor of the division. Pres. Clawson then said, "It is the feeling of the Council of the Twelve that at the same time a fresh start be made in both stakes, and, if necessary, the heads of all organizations be released." It was then proposed that the stake presidency and High Council, of the Woodruff Stake, be released, which was done. Pres. Clawson then requested that I give him the names of some representative men who would constitute the presidency and High Council for both stakes, which I proceeded to do. The dividing lines of the two stakes were then considered, a map prepared by the stake clerk, showing the location of the wards, the distance from one ward to another, and their populations. Three groups of wards, numbered Group No. 1, Group No. 2, Group No. 3, were considered. Group No. 1 was discarded and the question lay between No. 2 and No. 3. Group No. 2 was outlined as follows: Diamondville, Kemmerer, Cumberland, Superior, Reliance, Rock Springs, Manila, Green River and McKinnon. If Group No. 2 was selected for the new stake, Rock Springs would be the headquarters. Group No. 3 comprised the wards of Lyman, Millburne, McKinnon, Mountain View, Green River, Rock Springs, Superior and Reliance, for the new stake, with Lyman as the headquarters. The question was discussed very freely, I favored Group No. 2 with Rock Springs as headquarters, and said that in conversation with Apostle David O. McKay he also favored Rock Springs for the headquarters of the new stake. I said the stake was growing east; it had gone west as far as it could. There

was a large valley about 46 miles north of Rock Springs known as the Eden Valley, which I thought would be settled in the near future, and would likely be colonized by our people; that there was also a large country down on Green River and its tributaries, which undoubtedly would be settled, and Rock Springs would then be quite central for these places, and would be the logical place for the stake headquarters. Brother George A. Neville said he had gone over the Eden valley with Pres. Baxter and was impressed just as he has expressed himself, and fully agreed with the suggestion of Pres. Baxter. Apostle Richard R. Lyman expressed himself as very much in favor of Lyman as the headquarters of the new stake. The meeting then adjourned until 9 o'clock Saturday morning.

Saturday morning at 9 o'clock the meeting re-convened and the matter of deciding where the headquarters of the new stake would be, was again taken up. The map was carefully studied, distances compared, etc., and after full consideration of the matter, it was decided that Group No. 2, with Rock Springs as headquarters, be selected for the new stake. After this Elder Lyman suggested that Elder Clawson and himself step out and have a private conversation regarding this matter, which they did, and after returning, the meeting was adjourned until the afternoon.

In the afternoon the stake presidency, stake clerk, High Council and bishoprics of the wards were invited to the meeting. Pres. Clawson said he would like to explain to the brethren present just what had been done so far concerning the division of the stake, and read the three propositions outlined by the stake clerk, with Evanston as headquarters for the Woodruff Stake, and either Rock Springs or Lyman for the headquarters of the new stake. Those present were then

asked to express themselves upon the question, and the majority favored Lyman. The meeting then adjourned until 9 o'clock Sunday morning.

Sunday morning the meeting convened at the appointed time. The stake presidency, stake clerk and High Council having been invited. Pres. Clawson then proposed that the new stake comprise the wards and branches as outlined in Group No. 3, with Lyman as headquarters. Before the question was put to vote, I said that I was opposed to this division, but if the brethren had made a new decision since yesterday I would support it, as they were my superior officers, but that it was contrary to my judgment, and the feelings of Apostle David O. McKay, as the matter was talked over with him, by Pres. Brown and myself, when returning from the last stake conference, held at Rock Springs. At that time Brother McKay was very much in favor of Rock Springs as the headquarters of the new stake. I did not favor this at that time, but after having gone over the Eden Valley while out on the Pioneer Trail with Elder Andrew Jenson, I was very much in favor of Rock Springs, as the headquarters of the new stake; but if the Apostles had decided upon Lyman, I would submit to their judgment.

Pres. James Brown said, "Pres. Baxter has given more thought to this matter than any other living man. Yesterday we voted unanimously for Group No. 2, with Rock Springs as the headquarters; today that decision has been changed, and we are requested to support another proposition; and while I favor the proposition decided upon yesterday, I will now accept and support the decision of the brethren of the Twelve." I then made the motion that we accept the proposition of the Apostles, and that Lyman be the headquarters of the new Stake. This was seconded by George A. Neville and

carried unanimously. Pres. James Brown then said, "At a recent meeting of the High Council it had been unanimously agreed that the new stake be named the Baxter Stake in honor of our stake president who had done more and thought more for the welfare of this part of the Lord's vineyard than any other man." This matter had been suggested before, but was not approved by the visiting brethren. So, when Pres. Brown made this suggestion that the new stake now contemplated be named the Baxter Stake, I arose and said that I would rather not have that matter considered, whereupon Pres. Brown withdrew his suggestion, in view of my feelings. Pres. Clawson then proposed that the new stake be named the Lyman Stake, which was unanimously sustained. Pres. Clawson then proposed that I be retained as the president of the Woodruff Stake with James Brown and George A. Neville as my counselors. The vote was unanimous and the High Council said, "That is just what we wanted, we desire no change in the presidency of the Woodruff Stake." The meeting then adjourned.

At the afternoon meeting of the conference the officers of the new stake were sustained, after which Pres. Clawson said, "I want you people to know that the presidency of the Woodruff Stake has the full approval of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles, and they have our approval on all they have done, and our full confidence.

Bishop H. Melvin Rollins was sustained as president of the Lyman Stake, and being called upon to express himself, spoke as follows: "I have never sought an office in the Church; yet I have been a presiding officer ever since I was ordained a Deacon as a young boy. I trust that the Lord will bless the people of the new stake, and also the Woodruff Stake. I love Pres. Baxter and have always loved him; he

has been like a father to me. I honor him and have always honored him, for the many counsels he has given me, while I have acted as Bishop of the Lyman Ward. I also love the other brethren, who have been laboring with him in directing the affairs of the Woodruff Stake. Pres. Baxter has never turned away from me when I have needed counsel, and I hope he never will, for I shall need his counsel now more than ever."

The conference was closed; the officers of the new stake are men who have been faithful officers in the Woodruff Stake, and were all very choice men, so the Lyman Stake was started out in good hands.

CHAPTER XXVIII

FUNERAL OF BYRON SESSIONS

While on the Pioneer Trail with Elder Andrew Jenson, we passed through the Eden Valley and selected a site for a third monument on the Pioneer Trail. It was near the Crossing of the Big Sandy River, at the intersection of the Pioneer Trail with the Yellowstone Highway and the Casper Highway; this was a beautiful location for a monument. On returning to Rock Springs, we presented the matter to the people of that ward and they expressed themselves as willing and anxious to erect this monument, on the spot designated.

At the first stake officers' meeting after the division of the stake, Pres. Brown said that some persons had reported that I had asked to be retained as president of the stake. He said that this statement or any other similar statement was false, the very opposite being the case. The facts were that I had asked the brethren to release me and not consider me in doing what they thought was best. At a meeting of the stake officers, held Aug. 4, 1926, the officers of the Relief Society Stake Board presented each of the stake presidency and clerk with a beautiful bouquet of flowers, in token of their love and esteem. At a meeting of the stake officers, held Aug. 13, 1926, I commented upon the division of the stake and said, "I am well pleased with the selection of the presidency and High Council of the new stake. They are men of energy and integrity—men who have been found true and steadfast in the work of the Lord. The key to the success of Pres. H. M. Rollins, so far, was that he never did anything without first consulting those who presided over him. He has never been out of harmony with the stake pres-

idency, but has always been in perfect accord. He is a very choice man and will make a splendid president of the new stake." Pres. James Brown said he had listened with a great deal of attention to the remarks of Pres. Baxter, both in the High Council and in this meeting. He said, "Pres. Baxter was honest and straight forward in all his deliberations with the leading brethren, who attended our last stake conference in the matters concerning the division of the Woodruff Stake, and I had no other thought but that we would all be released as the presidency of the Woodruff Stake, and then he as a Patriarch in this stake could perform the functions of that office and calling."

Joseph B. Martin, one of our most faithful stake officers, was called by death Aug. 20, 1926.

John McPhie, who had been called to be a member of the High Council, was released as Bishop of the Kemmerer Ward Jan. 16, 1927, and Adelbert E. Wilde was called to be his successor.

I attended the funeral of Byron Sessions, in the 16th Ward, Salt Lake City, January 19, 1928. Byron Sessions was my counselor in the Woodruff Ward Bishopric for eight years, and when the Woodruff Stake was organized on June 6, 1898, he was chosen as my first counselor. Two years later he was called to the Big Horn Basin, to assist in colonizing that country and had charge of the construction of an important canal project. Brother Sessions was a very faithful counselor, both in the bishopric and in the stake presidency. After laboring faithfully in the Big Horn Country about a year, he was chosen as president of the Big Horn Stake. When he left for the Big Horn Stake, he was well equipped with teams, harness, and wagons and had a splendid outfit to make a start in a new country. But upon arriving at

his destination, and in starting to work on the canal, he no longer had an income. He had to support his boys and their families, and it was not long until the funds he had at his command were exhausted. His horses got poisoned, and he lost all but two or three head. His wife took seriously ill and he was at her bedside for fourteen years, or until she died. He was, therefore, reduced to extreme poverty, and



BYRON SESSIONS

was badly discouraged, but, through it all, he was never heard to complain. After the death of his wife, May, his oldest daughter, took him to her home, and treated him with extreme kindness; but not long after she also died, which intensified his grief. Bro. Sessions then went to Salt Lake City with the intention of working in the Temple, but his mind was not in a condition to do much Temple work. He

rented a room from his sister where he otherwise was among strangers, no one knowing of his former life. He accepted the calling of a ward teacher in the 16th ward, where he resided, and performed that duty faithfully. The speakers at the funeral were Bishop Joseph H. Lake, of the 16th Ward, who said he was a very faithful ward teacher. His companion teacher then spoke of the pleasant associations he had had with him as a companion in ward teaching, and that he was always on hand to perform his duty. A brother Willey of Bountiful, who knew Brother Sessions as a boy, was the next speaker. He said that as a boy Bro. Sessions was very much like other boys, always ready to play a practical joke, and was sometimes a little mischievous. Pres. Heber J. Grant said that he had not been very well acquainted with Pres. Sessions, and had not visited the Big Horn Country, while Bro. Sessions was president of the stake, but had learned from Apostle A. Owen Woodruff of the wonderful work he had accomplished out in that country; spoke of the labors of the Pioneers in a general way, and delivered a splendid sermon. I was the last speaker and referred to his life as I have outlined it here in this narrative. I was pleased that I had the opportunity of speaking, for there was no one there that knew of his big life as I did.

A reception was given by the people of the Lyman Ward to the presidency of the Woodruff Stake March 4, 1929. Pres. Brown being in Salt Lake City could not attend, but Pres. Neville and I with our wives started for Lyman in the morning, and when about seven miles east of Evanston, my car struck a piece of slick ice, skidded off the road and tipped over in a snowdrift. Sister Baxter was hurt, her collar bone being fractured. I went back to Evanston, where I secured the services of a man with a wrecking car, who

soon placed my own car back on the road. After that we proceeded on our way to Lyman. The people of the Lyman Ward gave us a royal welcome, and did everything in their power to show their love and esteem for us. We had a most wonderful time with these people, which was only marred by the accident to Sister Baxter. She, however, did not complain, but bore her sufferings heroically until all the festivities were over. This was a time long to be remembered—another demonstration of love and esteem on the part of the good people in the Bridger Valley for their former stake presidency.

A stake conference was held in the Woodruff Ward April 4, 1928, at which Apostle David O. McKay was in attendance, representing the general authorities of the Church. He requested a private conversation with me, during which he stated that the matter of my release had been up before the Council of the Twelve. He had reported the conversation he and I had together when returning on the train from the Rock Springs Conference, in which I said that my health was failing, and I thought a change in the stake presidency would be a good thing. I told him at that time, that I would not resign, nor ask to be released, but that any time the authorities felt like releasing me, it would be quite agreeable to me. Brother McKay wanted to know if I felt now as I did at the time of the former interview, and I answered that I did. This ended the interview, and nothing more was said regarding this matter.

CHAPTER XXIX

OUR GOLDEN WEDDING

At an executive meeting of the stake officers held in Evanston early in 1928 I informed those present that on May 8th of that year my wife and I would celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of our wedding and also my wife's 70th birthday, and asked the stake officers present if they would like to join with the family in the celebration of this great epoch in our life's history. All of those present expressed themselves as being highly honored by this privilege, and showed great enthusiasm in the matter, saying, "If you and Sister Baxter will just say what you want done, we will be like obedient children and 'it shall be done.'"

The matter of the celebration and my wife's 70th birthday was discussed at several of the stake officers' meetings. Committees were appointed, and all arrangements made in a very elaborate way. The Evanston people desired that the celebration should be held at Evanston, as that was our home. The Woodruff people wanted it there, because we had lived there longer than anywhere else. The Randolph people thought that Randolph should be the place chosen for the celebration, because we were married there, and had spent our early life there. So it was decided to hold it at Randolph.

Invitations were sent out to between three and four hundred people, including the present stake officers of both stakes, and all former stake officers; and many friends and relatives of both families. The day arrived and nearly all who had been invited were present. People came from Provo, Magna, Salt Lake City, Ogden, Brigham City, Logan, Wellsville,

and all parts of the Woodruff and Lyman stakes ; over three hundred guests in all.

An elaborate banquet had been prepared by the people of Randolph. Bishop Oluf Larson was chairman of the general committee, and Grace Norris president of the Y. L. M. I. A., had charge of the banquet. The guests arrived at 10 o'clock in the morning. The weather was lovely. The forenoon was occupied with a general handshaking and getting acquainted program interspersed with songs and speeches. The people brought with them a wonderful spirit of good cheer and sociability. Pres. James Brown was master of ceremonies, and was at his best. The morning exercises were held in the auditorium of the tabernacle and at 2 o'clock the large assembly retired to the basement, where the banquet was served. There were three tables extending from one end of the large room to the other, and tables in each of the adjoining smaller rooms, so that all of the people could be seated at once. A great number of waitresses were on hand to take care of everyone present. The decorations of the building and tables were white and gold, with many flowers on each table, and also a number of cards placed on the tables bearing the figures "50" in gold letters. Among the beautiful gifts of flowers were some pieces from the Evanston Floral Company, sent by the Starkey Family ; the figures "50" in gold were also contributed by them. Thomas Ashton and wife of Provo brought a large box of flowers. Joseph Dean of Salt Lake City and his daughter Myrtle, Mrs. Bullock of Magna, my sister Lillie from Logan, Sister Harry Tremelling from Almy, and others, too numerous to mention, contributed floral offerings. At the table of the bride and groom there was an elaborate wedding cake, artistically designed and crowned by a golden bell. Seated at this table were the presidencies of the two stakes, their clerks and

wives, the High Council and Bishops of both stakes with their partners. Bishop Emanuel M. Tyson and wife of Brigham City presented us with an "Edith Cavell" rose tree, and on one of its branches hung a five dollar gold piece minted in the year of our wedding, fifty years ago. Bishop Tyson's father and mother were at our wedding at that time, and were very dear friends, but have since passed to the other side. Bishop Tyson had been in the hospital at Kansas City, Mo., for some time and told his doctor that he must attend this event, so the doctor fixed him up so that he was enabled to be in attendance. He was a life-long friend. Many speeches were given at the banquet and many congratulations offered to the bride and groom. Recitations were also given by James E. Eyre of the Lyman stake presidency and Sister William J. Starkey of Evanston.

After satisfying the appetite with a delicious repast, the people again assembled in the large auditorium, where another program was given. The audience sang, "Love At Home," followed by prayer by Patriarch John C. Gray. Pres. Brown, being best man, and Sister Starkey bridesmaid, presented the bridal bouquet, which was a beautiful floral offering contributed by the Starkey family. Bro. Brown then made the address of welcome, after which an enormous "golden cake" was presented to the bride and groom by the officers and members of the Lyman Stake. The presentation speech was made by Bishop Manwaring of Green River. The cake was decorated with yellow roses all around the sides and edge, and on the top was a beautiful rainbow, artistically designed. At the end of the rainbow was a pot of gold, filled with real gold coins. Pres. Brown then, in his pleasing way, on behalf of the Woodruff Stake, presented to us a beautiful and expensive Kolster Radio set with a basket of flowers. I re-

sponded to each presentation, all of which was a surprise to me, as I had warned the stake officers that there should be no presents. A speech was then made by Pres. H. Melvin Rollins of the Lyman Stake, who referred to the high esteem in which Bro. and Sister Baxter were held by the people of that stake. Pres. George A. Neville, representing the Woodruff Stake, spoke in great praise of the labors of my wife and myself in the Woodruff Stake, saying it would have been impossible for me to have performed my duties as well as I did, had it not been for the assistance of my wife, who took care of things at home while I was out in the stake. Often I was away from home from one to two weeks at a time, when all the care and responsibility at home rested upon my wife. None knew more of these things than Pres. Neville, for we had been close neighbors and bosom friends for forty years. Many musical numbers were given and among them one which was quite a feature of the occasion, namely, a song in character and costume acted by the grand children of the bride and groom, entitled "Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet." It may seem strange to some to hear us refer to our grandchildren as we had no children of our own. But we have nevertheless fourteen grandchildren—the children of boys and girls who were not our own, but whom we raised, and who are just as dear to us as they could possibly be, if they were our own, and their children love us as much as it is possible to love grandparents. The next feature was a song by our girl Nettie, who is now Mrs. Ezra Brown, Jun., the mother of seven children. She sang, "Will You Love Me When I'm Old"—the same song that was sung by the bride at our wedding fifty years before. I composed the words of a song in reply at this time and gave it the title, "I Will Love You When You're Old." This was sung by John

Neilson, our son-in-law, who set the words to music. This was a very pleasing and affective part of the program. The benediction was pronounced by Bishop Oluf Larson, after which the whole company retired to the dining hall, where the tables were again loaded with delicious food. During the repast the time was interspersed with music, songs, jokes, etc.; then the company adjourned to the dance hall, where



JOHN M. BAXTER AND WIFE

they continued with music, speeches, stories and dancing. One of the songs featured was "When It's Springtime in the Rockies," which was most beautifully sung by Mrs. George C. Meredith, of Salt Lake City, a sister to John and Robert Neilson. The Neilsons were all remarkable singers. In a

speech I complimented my wife in celebrating the 70th anniversary of her birth, refering to her faithfulness in assisting me in all my labors during the 50 years of our married life. This part of the entertainment continued until after midnight, when all the guests returned to their homes. This was without any question one of the greatest events of our lives.

Following is the full text of the two most impressive songs rendered as a part of the program:

Will You Love Me When I'm Old?

I would ask of you, my darling,
A question soft and low—
One that gives me many a heart-ache
As the moments come and go;
Your love I know is truthful,
But the truest love grows cold
It is this that I would ask you:
Will you love me when I'm old?

Chorus:

Life's morn will soon be waning
And its evening bells be toled,
But my heart will know no sadness
If you'll love me when I'm old.

Down the stream of time together
We are sailing side by side;
Hoping some bright day to anchor
Safe beyond the swaying tide.
Today our sky is cloudless,
But the night may clouds unfold,
And if storms may gather round us,
Will you love me when I'm old?

When my hair shall shame the snowdrift,
And my eyes shall dimmer grow,
I would lean upon some loved one
In the valley as we go.
I would claim of you a promise,
Worth to me a world of gold,
It is only this, my darling,
Will you love me when I'm old.

Answer

I Will Love You When You're Old

I will answer now your question
Given fifty years ago,
That you said had caused you heartache
As the moments come and go,
My love has never faltered,
Nor has it ere grown cold,
And I love you more than ever,
Now that you are growing old.

Down the stream of time together
We have sailed for fifty years,
And my love for you, my darling,
Oft has wiped away your tears.
Our sky was never brighter,
No clouds do I behold,
And the storms will never harm you,
For I love you, now you're old.

Your hair has shamed the snowdrift,
But your eyes no dimmer grow,
You have leaned upon a loved one
And through life we've journeyed so.
My vows have ne'er been broken
For to me you're more than gold,
You are dearer now, my darling,
Just because, you're growing old.

One week after this event, I called all the stake officers together at Evanston in a social gathering, and Sister Baxter served that wonderful cake presented by the Lyman Stake. It was served to over fifty people with ice cream. The cake was made and designed by Robert Scott and wife of Rock Springs, and perhaps others of that ward took a hand in designing it. On this occasion I referred to the evidence of love and esteem which this cake implied. Sister Scott's maiden name was Sessions, she being a sister of the late Byron Sessions, who was my first counselor in the stake presidency and later acted as president of the Big Horn Stake.

We received many letters of congratulation from those who were not able to attend the celebration, a few of which I copy here.

Salt Lake City, April 24th, 1928

Pres. John M. Baxter and wife,

Evanston, Wyo.,

My Dear Friends:

I have an invitation to attend the Fiftieth Anniversary of your wedding. If my present plans are carried out, I will be in the East on the day of your anniversary. I am sure that you will have a very enjoyable time. Sister Grant joins me in sending love and sincere congratulations and best wishes for continued years of peace, prosperity, and happiness. I rejoice in the very fine work that Brother Baxter has performed during the many years he has presided over the Woodruff Stake, and I have pleasure of assuring you both of my appreciation of Brother Baxter's splendid labors, and of the fine support that Sister Baxter has been to him. May Heaven's choicest blessings ever attend you, is my most earnest and sincere prayer.

Your friend and Brother,

Heber J. Grant.

Salt Lake City, Utah, April 30th, 1928.

John M. Baxter,
Evanston, Wyo.

My Dear Brother :

On my return from California, where I attended the Boy Scout Convention and other meetings, I found your very kind favor of April 17th, awaiting me with an invitation to attend your Golden Wedding reception. To have you remember me, and invite me to be present on such an occasion is much appreciated, and I assure you, if possible, I will arrange to be present. I have not been well for some time, and am therefore compelled to consider my own condition prior to leaving home. If the weather is good, and I am able to drive my own car, I think I can overcome all other difficulties. Sister Smith, too, desires to thank you for your remembrance, and while she was not born at Randolph, her parents moved there when she was a very small child. Your long service in the Church has endeared you to many people, and I am sure all will rejoice with you, that your life has been preserved, and that you have retained your faculties to accomplish such a splendid work. Sister Baxter, too, is to be congratulated on living so long and useful a life, and we hope that you may both live, and enjoy life for many, many years. I have always appreciated the friendship that you have both extended to us, and any kind feeling that you may have had for us, you may be sure is fully reciprocated. Praying the Lord to abundantly bless you, and give you joy in your ministry and enable you to see something every day that you can do to be helpful to others, and bring satisfaction to yourself, and wishing you every blessing that your hearts can desire, in which Sister Smith joins me, I am,

Respectfully, Your brother in the Gospel,

George Albert Smith.

Salt Lake City, Utah, April 17th, 1928.

Mr. John M. Baxter,

Evanston, Wyo.,

Dear Brother Baxter:

I received your invitation to attend your Golden Wedding. I appreciate this kind remembrance. Since I will not be able to be there I am extending to you and Sister Baxter my congratulations, and hope and pray that the Lord will bring you many years of continued peace and happiness together. It is delightful to think of people, getting along so well as you have, living so many years in the joy of each other's association, but it is but a beginning of that which belongs to you and will extend in the Eternities to come. Trusting that you may have a pleasant and happy occasion I am, with best wishes, your brother,

Melvin J. Ballard.

Salt Lake City, Utah, April 19, 1928.

Pres. John M. Baxter,

Evanston, Wyo.,

I wish I could respond in person, to your kind and much appreciated invitation, which was duly received a day or two since. Nothing would please me more, than to bring Sister Whitney with me, and be among the guests of the Golden Wedding of yourself and your good wife; but inexorable duty demands my presence elsewhere on the auspicious day, and I know you too well to doubt that you will fully appreciate my situation. We both send our best and kindest wishes to you and Sister Baxter, and shall be with you in spirit, though necessarily absent in body. May your cup of happiness overflow, in this life and in the higher and better life to come.

Yours most sincerely,

Orson F. Whitney.

Green River, Wyo., April 10, 1928.

Mr. and Mrs. John M. Baxter,

Evanston, Wyo.,

Dear Uncle John and Aunt Agnes:

It is with extreme pleasure that we received today an invitation to your Golden Wedding. We are truly grateful that you should thus remember us, and that we are privileged to be numbered among your friends. Be assured, we deem this a great honor. We feel very near to both of you. We are also pleased to pay you tribute at this writing, to know that you have at all times given to us good counsel, not as a Latter-day Saint alone, but as friends and neighbors. We shall always cherish you and honor you, as long as you live; and long after you have received your reward, so justly your due, our memory shall follow you. We hope for your lives to be continued that we may have the joy of your benevolent counsel. With much love and admiration for both of you we sincerely remain,

Lottie and Arthur Davis.

At this writing, while recording the letter of congratulations of Lottie and Arthur Davis, our girl Nellie has just informed us, of the death of Lottie. In the above letter, she had hoped, that long after we had passed on to our reward, they would still cherish our memory. But Providence has seen fit to take her first. Lottie was the daughter of Orson J. and Ann Spencer, early pioneers of Randolph, Utah, with whom I was intimately associated as a young man. I had known Lottie from her birth. She was a lovely child, and grew up with a kind, sweet and affable disposition, which remained with her until the day of her death. She was talented as a singer and devoted to her choir work. She sang at many, many funerals, and never failed to appear, when

requested, regardless of distance or difficulties that might beset her, she was absolutely dependable. She became noted as a soloist and was called the Wyoming nightingale. She sang as one of the soloists at the Saltair Pavilion, with the U. P. Evanston Male Chorus, and was much in demand at the Old Timers' Clubs of the U. P. Railroad, whenever they met; she was also honored as a soloist in the Salt Lake Tabernacle at the conferences during the last two years, and has thrilled many, many people over the radio with her beautiful voice. Lottie was a member of the Woodruff Stake Primary Board, was dependable, staunch and true, and never failed in the discharge of her duties. She was to me very much like my own daughter. After the death of her father, she sought my counsel and confided in me as she would in her father.

Evanston, Wyo., May 8, 1928.

Dear Brother and Sister Baxter:

On this your golden wedding anniversary we desire to mingle our congratulations with the many others we know you have received. So we do congratulate you and say: Would to heaven we all could and would so live that we might have Golden Wedding Anniversaries, and have them filled as yours are, with a realization that you have given the world your best, that the world is better for the result of your gift, and that you have received, in return, from the world, some of the choicest gifts, in the form of a wealth of friendship extending from one end of Zion to the other. Numbered among your friends are some of God's choicest spirits. May God bless you, as we know he will, to the end of all time.

Dr. and Mrs. Eskelson.

CHAPTER XXX

RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE WOODRUFF STAKE

In June, 1928, my physical condition was such that I thought I must do something for immediate relief. I consulted the local physicians, but they did not seem to be able to diagnose my case and advised that I go to Salt Lake City, and have an examination, which I decided to do. As I was boarding the train at Evanston, for Salt Lake City, I met Apostle Melvin J. Ballard, who was returning from visiting the Star Valley Stake. I was very pleased to meet him and have his company to Salt Lake City. During our conversation on the train, I informed him that my object in going to Salt Lake City was to have a physical examination. I had been suffering extremely for some time past, and it seemed that I could not get any relief. Brother Ballard asked if I had any particular doctor that I thought to consult. I told him not especially, but I had thought to see Ralph Richards. He said he was good, but there was a Dr. Stevenson that he had a great deal of confidence in, who had operated upon his daughter for appendicitis, and was very successful. In fact, he had done all the work for his family in that line, and if I thought that I would like to consult him, he would be pleased to go with me and give me an introduction to him. I thanked him and said, I would accept his kind offer. The conversation then drifted upon my stake work. He said the matter of my release had come before the Council of the Twelve, and that it would take place at our conference next month, and he had been appointed to attend the conference and effect the re-organization of the stake. He

said, however, that the matter would rest with me entirely, as to whether I should be released now, or at some future time. I said it was all right, my health was broken down, and I preferred to be released now. We had a very pleasant visit until we reached Salt Lake City. According to appointment, I went to Bro. Ballard's office next morning, and we then went to the doctor's office. The surgeon was not in town, but his brother who was a physician was there. This doctor said that his brother would be home in a few days, and in the meantime he thought I had better have some X-ray pictures taken. So I was taken to the X-ray man, and he was instructed to give me a complete examination. I was with the X-ray man a week, and had twelve pictures taken. When the surgeon, L. A. Stevenson returned, he examined me very thoroughly, and decided that I had appendicitis and enlargement of the prostate gland, and said it would be necessary for me to have an operation for both, but not at the same time. But when I recovered from one, I could have the other attended to. He thought best to attend to the prostate gland trouble first, as he believed that the appendix case was not serious. I do not know what became of the X-ray pictures. I never heard of them again, and I have no idea of what they disclosed. The doctor wanted me to remain and have this operation taken care of at this time, but I decided to go home and make arrangement to come down later. I found Dr. L. A. Stevenson to be all that Apostle Ballard said of him; a splendid surgeon and a fine man in every way and he gave me very kind and efficient service.

On my return home I found a letter awaiting me from the Presidency of the Church, informing me that they had decided to release me at the stake conference to be held in

July, and desired that I select my successor, and send them his name. I did so and sent in the name at once. I showed my counselors the letter from the First Presidency and informed them that I had sent in the name of William R. Smith as my successor, in which they heartily approved. At the following High Council meeting I informed the members of the council of the contents of the letter, and said I had made a selection of my successor, but I would like each of them to send in a name to me, and if the majority of them sent a name different to that I had selected I would submit to the judgment of the majority. When the names came in all but two were the same as the name I had presented.

At the stake conference held at Randolph July 1, 1928, Apostle Melvin J. Ballard was present representing the general authorities of the Church. At a little meeting attended by Apostle Ballard and the stake presidency at the home of Bishop Larson in Randolph, Bro. Ballard asked me if I had changed my mind about William R. Smith as president of the stake. I told him I had not, and thought that he was the right man. He then turned to the other brethren and said, "It is customary to call together the High Council and leading brethren to consider the selection of officers, in a case of this kind, but the First Presidency said that in this case it would not be necessary, that he was to leave it all to Pres. Baxter. This was the greatest compliment I had ever received in all my life, to think the Presidency of the Church had sufficient confidence in me, and in my judgment in such an important matter, as the selection of officers for a stake of Zion.

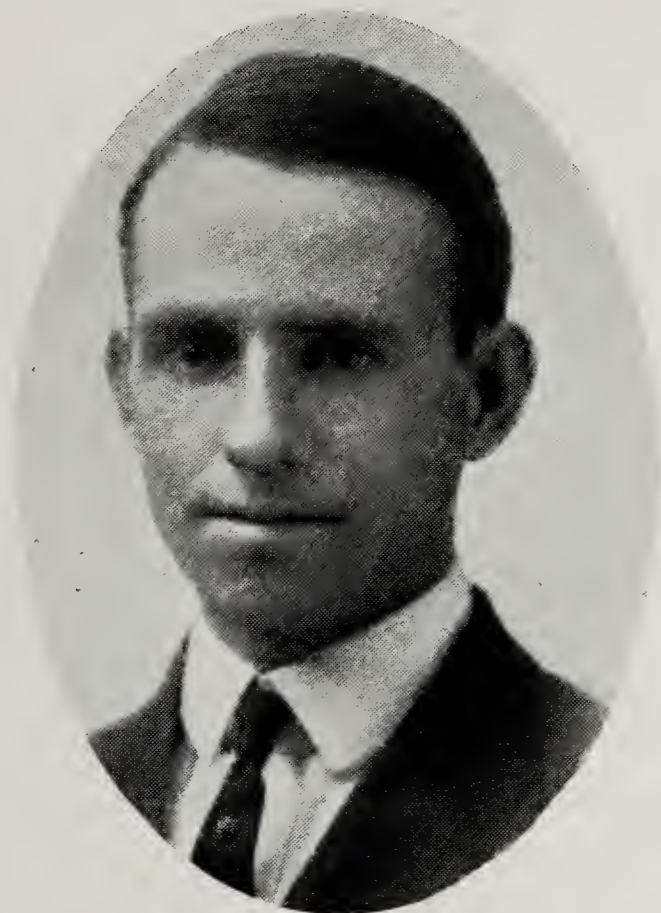
At this conference, the stake presidency was released, and the new officers installed with the best of feelings. There was not a jar in the proceedings. The blessing pronounced

upon the head of Wm. R. Smith by Apostle Ballard, in setting him apart, and the promises made to him were wonderful, and also on the other members of the stake presidency, James Brown, Jun., and John M. Peart. The Apostle was truly inspired when he gave these blessings. Brother Ballard said to me that he (Ballard) was a member of the High Council



JAMES BROWN, SEN., JOHN M. BAXTER, GEORGE A. NEVILLE
of the Cache Stake, when the father of Pres. William R. Smith was the president of the stake, and he dearly loved that man. He said when he was blessing William R. Smith, he could feel the presence of Bro. Smith's father there. I felt that that was true also of the other two brethren. Bro, Brown was there in the flesh to see his son exalted to this high and honored position in the Church of Jesus Christ, and I know that his heart swelled within his bosom, when he heard

and felt the wonderful blessings that were given him under the hands of an inspired Apostle of Jesus Christ. And if the father of John M. Peart could be present in the spirit, how that faithful man must have rejoiced to see his son so exalted and receive such a blessing. Brother John M. Peart's father



WILLIAM R. SMITH

was as true and faithful a man as ever lived in the Church. His whole life was devoted to the work of the Lord, and there could be nothing in this life, or in the spirit world, that would give him so much joy and satisfaction as to see his children active in the service of the Lord. So these men, comprising the presidency of the Woodruff Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are worthy sons of worthy sires, and there is no doubt but the affairs of the Woodruff Stake will be carried on with great wisdom and efficiency.

A few weeks after the re-organization of the stake, the new stake officers and the people of the stake gave a reception in honor of the retiring presidency. The reception was held at the City Park at Evanston, and people assembled from all parts of the stake. Lunch was served and a program of songs



JOHN M. PEART

and speeches was rendered. A feature of the program was the presence of the Union Pacific Male Voice Glee Club—30 in number—under the direction of John Neilson, which gave several beautiful selections. After the close of the exercises, the three retiring members of the stake presidency were presented with a beautiful overstuffed chair, one to each member. They were very beautiful and expensive chairs, selected by the presidency of the Relief Society Board, and the presentation speech was given by Elder Percy G. Matthews.

CHAPTER XXXI

SICKNESS AND CONVALESCENCE

In October, 1928, I attended the general conference of the Church in Salt Lake City, and my side seemed somewhat better while I was there. I returned home, driving my own car, but that night I was siezed with a very severe attack of appendicitis. I was in intense pain for several days. Our girl Nettie and her husband came up from their ranch on their way to Salt Lake City. Nettie was suffering with a severe attack of gall stones; they were intending to go by train, but I told her husband that if he would drive my car, I would go with them and receive treatment at the same time. Nettie suffered extremely that night while stopping at a hotel, and I was also in a bad condition. It was decided that Nettie should be operated upon the next day. I consulted my doctor regarding my own case, and after examination, he decided, that it was appendicitis, and recommended that I be operated upon at once. Desiring to see Nettie through her operation before I went into the hospital, I waited a few days to see that she was all right. The night I went into the hospital, I suffered extremely all night. I was taken to the operating rooms at 9 o'clock next morning. In the operation the doctor found that I had a ruptured appendix, and a large abcess, the size of a small lemon under my right kidney. The doctor said that he never saw a case like it before, and expressed his surprise that I did not make more fuss about it. A great amount of puss and filth came from the drain that he left in my side, but I got along very well until the third day, when pneumonia set in, and on the fourth day I began

to sink. The nurse became alarmed and sent for the doctor, and he also was very much alarmed and got busy. He injected a quart of glucose in normal salt solution in my chest and did all he could to revive me, but I could feel the life gradually leaving me. I told the nurse to phone Elder David O. McKay to come to me, but he was attending a conference in southern Utah, and would not be back until late at night. I then tried to get one of the other Apostles, but it being Sunday they were all away. I then requested the nurse to call Brother McKay's wife and tell her to have Brother McKay come to the hospital when he returned, even if it was late. I was getting weaker all the time, and could feel distinctly that I could not last long. Brother McKay arrived at midnight and proceeded at once to administer to me. The moment he took his hands from my head I felt a reaction, I felt life coming back through my whole system in the same manner as I felt it departing before, and I gained strength from that time on. I must also attribute a great deal to the nursing I received at the hospital. I had two special nurses, one for nights and one for days. A young woman by the name of Miss Green was day nurse and she was a wonderful nurse. When I was stricken with pneumonia, she started at once to apply hot packs, and never let up a moment until she had it broken and under control. I had very many visitors while I was in the hospital, and many flowers were sent from my friends at home; also my friends in Salt Lake, so that my room was continually supplied with flowers. My wife rented a room near the hospital and was with me every day. I was in the hospital three weeks, and could not possibly receive better care than I received there. The kindness shown me by all concerned was wonderful. Bishop Joseph Dean, who had presided as the Bishop of the Spring Valley Ward, was a

regular visitor; and when I got ready to leave the hospital, he accompanied me to the depot. Mrs. George Meredith came and took me to the depot in her car. And when we arrived there John W. R. Rennie, the manager of the Blyth & Fargo stores at Evanston, and his wife, were there on their way to Evanston. They took me in charge and looked after all my wants until we arrived at Evanston. About twenty-five friends met us at the Evanston railroad station. William R. Smith immediately took possession of me. Sister Harriet Spencer had come with her car to take me home. I cannot mention all these kind friends; they are so numerous, but many of them are the sons and daughters of men and women that I had associated with in the Church in my younger days, and as they passed away, their sons and daughters became associated with me in Church work. They really seemed to me like my own children, and they, too, loved and respected me as their father.

I remained six weeks in Evanston with my girl Nellie and got along very nicely.

CHAPTER XXXII

TEMPLE WORK

In November, 1928, Pres. Heber J. Grant paid me a visit and remained with me all night. Before leaving in the morning, he asked what I intended to do, when I recovered; I said I thought of moving to Ogden, where I had bought a little farm and believed I could make a living on it. He said, he thought it would be better for me to go to Salt Lake City, to do some work in the Temple. I informed him that I would like to do so, but that I must do something to provide a living for myself and wife. He said he would try and arrange it so that I could work in the Temple, while I was recovering at least, as I would not be able to do any manual labor for some time.

A few weeks after his visit I received a letter from him with the following proposition: That if I would come to Salt Lake City he would furnish me a good room in Hotel Utah, with light, and heat, free of charge; and he would pay my wife and me for doing work in the Temple for him, until my recovery. We accepted this kind offer, and after the holidays we engaged in Temple work. As suggested we were very comfortable in the hotel, and received similar courtesy to that extended to the Church leaders who lived there. Pres. and Sister Grant were exceptionally kind and attentive to us. On returning from his trips to California and other places, the President called on us and showed wonderful consideration for us. Sister Grant, also, took us out driving over the city, invited us to dine with them at the hotel and did all she could to make it pleasant for us.

At the Temple Pres. George F. Richards took a special interest in us, as did all the Temple workers and made it very pleasant for us while we were there. Pres. Grant came to the Temple every Thursday evening to do Temple work and brought all his family that was available. We were in their company and got well acquainted with the family.

While at the hotel Dr. Talmage and his wife, who were living there, were also very friendly to us. Sister Talmage invited Sister Baxter to visit her in her rooms and they became very much attached to each other. When spring came and the tourists began to fill up the hotel, Pres. Grant suggested that we give up the room at the hotel to live in their home, which we did and had the free use of their home and all that was in it. He assured us that we would have good neighbors up there, as his daughters and their families lived all around him, and he had about thirty-six grandchildren, so he did not think we would get lonesome. We found this to be true. We had good neighbors and associated with a lot of the sweetest little children that it has been my pleasure to meet.

Later, Sister Grant came to live with us, and shortly after this Dr. Talmage went to Los Angeles to deliver lectures over the radio. Sister Talmage also came to live in the home with us. So we had good company and spent a very pleasant time until the Temple was closed in June. Then we returned to Evanston. When we were ready to come home, James Brown, Jun., brought our automobile down from Evanston and took us home.

We shall never forget the kindness of Brother and Sister Grant to us, during my recovery from my sickness.

On our return home we found ourselves very rich in spirits, but with an empty pocket book. In our move from

Woodruff to Evanston we had lost heavily in disposing of our property, and for a period of two years I had not been able to do any work on account of my physical condition. That, together with a very heavy doctor and hospital bill, which we paid in cash without one dollar of assistance from any source, except a reduction made by Dr. Stevenson on my operation bill, reduced us financially, so that when we returned home, we found ourselves completely broke, as far as money was concerned.

We had rented our little ranch at Almy, except the spot where the house and buildings stand; so, when we returned, we went back to live in our little ranch home. Before our return, our girl Nellie had given the house a thorough cleansing, and had everything in order. Next day after arriving in Evanston we drove over just to see the place, and while we had enjoyed the comforts and luxuries of first-class hotel life for several months in Salt Lake City, and had been waited on, as it were, hand and foot, by friends and servants, I never before felt the words of the good old song, "Home, Sweet Home," so appropriate and impressively applied, as I did on this occasion, when we returned to our own little humble ranch home in Almy. My wife sat down in a chair and said, "Now, I'm in my little home, and it is mine, and I propose to stay in it the rest of my life."

CHAPTER XXXIII

BANQUETED AT LYMAN AND McKINNON

In August, 1930, the former stake presidency and clerk were invited to meet with the officers of the Lyman Stake at their union meeting at Lyman. Pres. James Brown, sen., was away from home and unable to attend, but Pres. George A. Neville, John Neilson, my wife and I were in attendance. We were the honored guests of the day, and given all the time of the meeting, except the opening address, which was given by Pres. H. Melvin Rollins, who bid us a very hearty welcome, and spoke of the long and pleasant associations, the officers of the stake had had with the former presidency of the Woodruff Stake, and of the high esteem in which they were held by the officers of the Lyman Stake. In fact, he was so profuse in his praise of the former stake presidency that it was somewhat embarrassing to us. The audience seemed to partake of the spirit that was manifested by Pres. Rollins, for it was not difficult to feel the warmth and friendship of all the people.

The speeches were all interspersed with songs. One of the most impressive of these was a song composed for the occasion by Sister Maud Young of Rock Springs, and sung by members of the Rock Springs Relief Society, led by Maggie James. The title of the song was, "Our Brethren, Dear." It was rendered most beautifully and with much feeling. A copy of the words was presented to each of the former presidency and clerk.

After the singing of this song, it was my turn to speak. I do not know when, before, I was so overcome in my feel-

ings, and it was with great difficulty that I could control myself. I spoke about half an hour and had the attention of the people. Brother John Neilson sang a very appropriate song, and delivered a very splendid address, after which Pres. George A. Neville spoke. He was very much imbued with the spirit of the occasion and delivered a most wonderful address. I never before heard Brother Neville speak so well as he did on this occasion.

After the meeting we were banqueted at the home of Pres. Rollins. All of the presidency and clerk of the Lyman Stake with their wives, the Bishopric of the Lyman Ward and their wives, and a few other invited guests attended. Pres. Rollins' wife is a wonderful hostess. I have been at her home many times at conference, when some of the authorities of the Church were there, and have seen her house crowded with conference visitors who had been invited to dinner. It always reminded me of our home at Woodruff, at conference time when our home frequently was crowded with invited guests and my wife had been preparing for a week to entertain the conference visitors. Those were happy days.

After dinner, we returned home, voting this to be one of the most enjoyable visits of our lives. It will long be remembered.

After our return from Salt Lake City about July, 1929, we received an invitation from the McKinnon Ward, to pay them a visit. George A. Neville took his large school bus. We intended to take quite a company of former stake officers. But as some were unable to go, our company consisted of George A. Neville, Brother and Sister Seth Thomas, Hyrum J. Norris, jun., and wife, Aurilla Wilson, Sister Baxter and myself, and Brother Norris' little boy. We left early in the morning and had a very pleasant trip to McKinnon, about

one hundred miles from Evanston, on Henry's Fork of Green River. On our arrival, we were met by a delegation who escorted us to the homes of our friends. We were kindly received and entertained that night.

The following day, being Sunday, we attended Sunday school and meeting. All the time of the two meetings was turned over to us, and after the meeting we were taken to the home of Charles S. Anderson, a prosperous sheep man, where a splendid dinner had been provided in our honor. A large number of invited guests were present, and we spent a very social and pleasant time. A bonfire social had been prepared for the evening, the boys had gone to the woods during the week, hauling out a large pile of wood—enough to supply one or two families with sufficient fuel for a whole winter. A program had been arranged and the people in all the surrounding country notified, and there was a wonderful gathering for that community. Although the weather was stormy, people came many miles to meet us, and participate in the festivities. Prominent among the long distance visitors was Peter G. Wall, Bishop of the Manila Ward. He was in the mountains when he received word of the contemplated visit, and rode on horse back 25 miles, and 18 miles in an automobile to be present; also Daniel Nelson, a former Bishop of Manila, but now a resident of Vernal, Utah, was present. He said he would go a hundred miles any time to meet us. The bonfire was lit, and, oh, such a fire! It illuminated the country for a long distance around. Over one hundred and fifty people were present surrounding that bonfire. All the speakers were profuse in their expressions of friendship and esteem for the visitors. The evening was spent in listening to speeches, songs and stories. Our talented singer, Aurilla Wilson, did her share of entertaining with a number of songs which were vigorously applauded.

The next day we had our pictures taken with a number of different groups, and then started on our return journey, arriving at our homes again without any mishaps, and with our hearts full of joy, for the kind reception given us by the good people of McKinnon.

We had become very much attached to the McKinnon people from the first. This little colony was founded by some very choice people from Provo and other Utah towns. Some of the families were large and nearly all of them related through marriage, making the colony like one large family. There were the Pulhams, the Terrys, the Andersons, the Heiners, and others. They were a very talented and fine lot of people and certainly knew how to entertain. During our associations with them, while they were a part of the Woodruff Stake, our stake officers, who had once visited them, always had a desire to do so again. On one of our first visits to this colony (about 1910) we gathered at the home of Brother Pulham, sen. Some distance from the home we raised the American Flag, on a flag pole that had been erected by the Pulham family. In this company were the following who had acted as stake officers in the Woodruff Stake: President George A. Neville, second counselor in the stake presidency; Hyrum J. Norris, jun., and wife; presidents of the Y. M. M. I. and Y. L. M. I. A.; Zina Taggart, president of Relief Societies; Harriet Stahley, counselor to Sister Taggart in the Relief Societies, and Otis Atkinson, of the Sunday school board.

The honor of hoisting the flag was assigned to me, and then we all joined in singing our national anthems, and some of the songs of Zion. We then dedicated that district of country to the Lord for homes and abiding places for Latter-day Saints. The spirit that prevailed during these cere-

monies can hardly be expressed. Many of the people shed tears, and I perhaps felt the solemnity of the occasion more than any one present, for I knew just what this people would have to pass through. Some of these settlers had left good, comfortable homes, with all the conveniences of city life, and social organizations, and had come out into this desert country to establish themselves in new homes and surroundings. To-day they were full of joyful anticipation of securing farms and homes, but I am sure that they did not realize the gigantic task that was yet before them. I, however, could see it, and my heart went out in sympathy for them. They had a canal, six miles long, to construct over very rough land and steep side hills, before they could secure any water for irrigation purposes. Then, they had their lands to break up and clear of brush, fences to build around the farms, houses and outbuildings to erect, and all this to do before they could realize anything for the support of their families. Long before all this could be accomplished, their surplus funds would be exhausted, and they would have to leave their homes to find employment for their support. They would have many obstacles to contend with. There would be breaks in their canal, and many delays from one cause and another, then discouragement would come. Young people would get home-sick and long for the associations of their former city friends and social activities, and a spirit of discontent would enter into their homes. I could see all this on that day, just as plain as after it happened, for I had passed through it all. And all these things did happen; but the brave parents of these families, who were now reaching their declining years, stood firmly by their boys and girls to encourage them in every move, although they themselves had never been accustomed to the trials of pioneer life. They shared all the hardships

of their children and tenaciously stuck to their task, until they had accomplished their purpose. After many years of toil, hardships and disappointments, they are now enjoying the fruits of their labors. They have established themselves in good homes, have productive farms, a dairy, and creamery, a country store, a modern school building with ample capacity, for their school, social and spiritual gatherings. They are now prosperous and happy.

Brother and Sister Pulham who are of English birth, but staunch, loyal American citizens, after hoisting the flag of our country over their domain and dedicating it as a dwelling place for their posterity (on the day referred to) remained firmly and steadfastly with them, until they saw their children thoroughly established and comfortable. Then they both broke down in health and went to the sea coast to live with their son Archibald, who now resides in California. After returning, Sister Pulham died in March, 1932, and Brother Pulham followed her about one month later, both being laid away near their mountain home.

CHAPTER XXXIV

A CHICKEN DINNER NEVER FORGOTTEN

For many years I have had the honor and pleasure of meeting many of the general authorities of the Church at stake conferences, entertaining them in my home and otherwise, and in that way have become quite intimately acquainted with nearly all of them. But I do not know that I ever made an impression on any of them, except one. On one of the Council of the Twelve I made a very deep and lasting impression, and it was this way. While I was Bishop of the Woodruff Ward, about 1894, I received a letter from Brother George Albert Smith, stating that he and Doctor L. W. Snow of Salt Lake City had decided to come out to Bear River Valley on a chicken hunt, and desired that I meet them at Wasatch, and take them out for a few days' hunting. Accordingly, I met them at the appointed time, and place, and took them to my home, where they stayed over night. We started out early next morning after chickens. I had a light spring wagon containing our bedding, food and camp outfit, which I drove. Soon after leaving Woodruff, the two hunters got out of the rig, and walked through the sage brush on either side of the road, hoping to scare up some sage hens, but were unsuccessful until they had travelled thus about twelve miles. Then we began to find chickens, and the young hunters became so enthused that they did not take time to eat but very little dinner. They walked through some lucern fields at a ranch, where the chickens became more and more plentiful; this increased their enthusiasm. As they killed the chickens, I dressed them and threw them in the rig,

and we got a nice lot of fine young birds. About an hour before sundown we pitched camp on the top of the summit between Bear Lake and Bear River. I made a camp fire, dressed a number of chickens and commenced to cook supper, when the hunters came into camp, completely worn out. They threw themselves down on the ground by the camp fire, and it seemed as if they could not move another step. They had been lying there only a short time when we heard a gun fired a short distance down the hollow. Then followed a regular bombardment and chickens were flying over our camp and everywhere. The hunters jumped up, grasped their guns and ran down the hollow like race horses and joined in the slaughter. Frank Nebeker and some others had come up from Laketown and found a flock of chickens (perhaps a thousand or more). Well, as I had nothing else to do, I just kept on frying chickens, which had been feeding in lucerne fields and were fat and sweet. I only cooked the breasts and legs. I had plenty of nice fresh butter, and plenty of time, so I kept turning them in butter until they were nice and brown. I had a large pan, and when I had a fry pan full cooked, I would empty it into the other pan which I set near the fire to keep warm. At dusk, when the hunters could not see to shoot any more, they came into camp, dragging themselves along with all the chickens they could carry. They sat down by the fire and commenced to eat their supper, and such a supper! It was wonderful how those chicken legs and breasts began to disappear. After supper, they went to bed and I presume dreamed of chickens. Since this chicken hunt, nearly every time I have met Brother Smith, after shaking hands, he has had something to say about fried chickens. Last summer (1931), when he was on his way with his caravan to Independence Rock, his company took lunch at Evanston. I joined them at lunch, and after

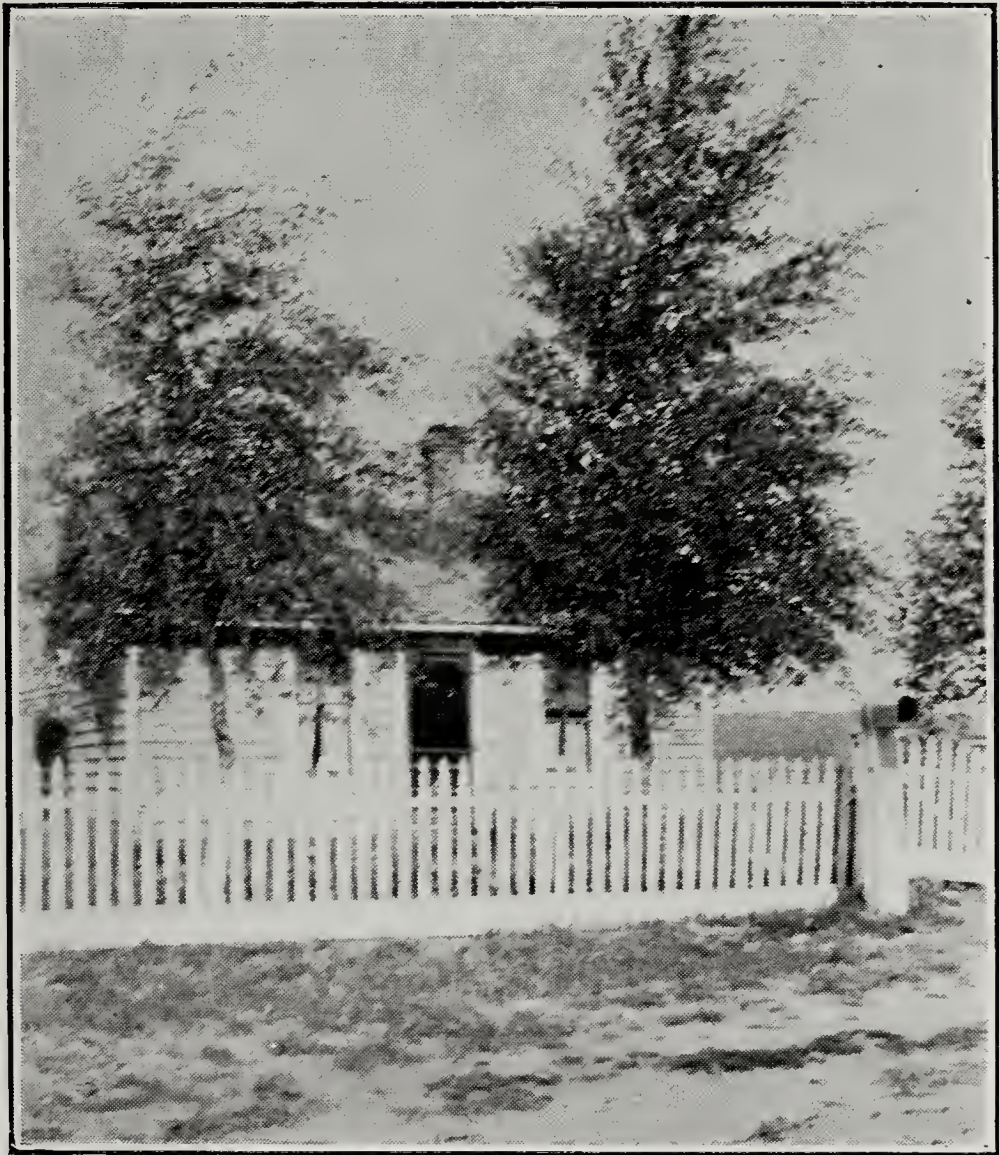
introducing me to his party, he said, "I have eaten in many nations of the earth, and under all conditions and circumstances, but I have never eaten a meal in my life, that I enjoyed, like one that this man cooked for me on the top of the mountains." This is why I feel that I once made a very lasting impression upon my dear friend George Albert Smith, who remembers a "chicken dinner" 38 years later.

CHAPTER XXXV

SUMMARY

In summing up my life's labors, I will say: In my ecclesiastical activities, which have occupied the greater part of my life, up to the time of my release as president of the Woodruff Stake of Zion, in July, 1928, I travelled in the discharge of my spiritual duties, including my mission attendance at conferences, and visits throughout the stake, 112,420 miles. I have attended every general conference of the Church and every meeting of these conferences for forty years. In the Bear Lake Stake, for eight years, while I was Bishop at Woodruff, I attended all the stake conferences. In the Woodruff Stake, for thirty years, while I acted as president, I attended all the stake conferences except two; once my wife was very ill, and once I was absent in California. In thirty years I attended all the monthly Priesthood and High Council meetings of the stake, except three. I have attended all the monthly union meetings of the Woodruff Stake except two; attended nearly every Sunday school and Sacrament meeting within my circle of activities, since I was seven years old, making a total of all meetings attended approximately 10,000. I have assisted in organizing three stakes of Zion and eighteen wards and branches, have assisted in building two temples, four meeting houses, and one Church academy. I have paid my tithing and offerings in the Church for fifty years. My wife and I have done Temple work in the Salt Lake Temple for 525 people. We have entertained in our home the leaders of the Church as follows: One President of the Church, twenty-one Apostles, one Presiding Patriarch, ten of the First Council of Seventy, and many other

leading brethren. In my temporal labors I have built two homes for my mother, and four for myself, and besides bought one. I have cleared and put under cultivation four farms, made and assisted in making five canals and three reservoirs, was engaged in the mercantile business nineteen years, and in the dairy and cattle business several years. In civic positions, I was postmaster twenty years, county clerk two terms, county treasure one term, chairman of county commissioners one term and member of the school board for some time.



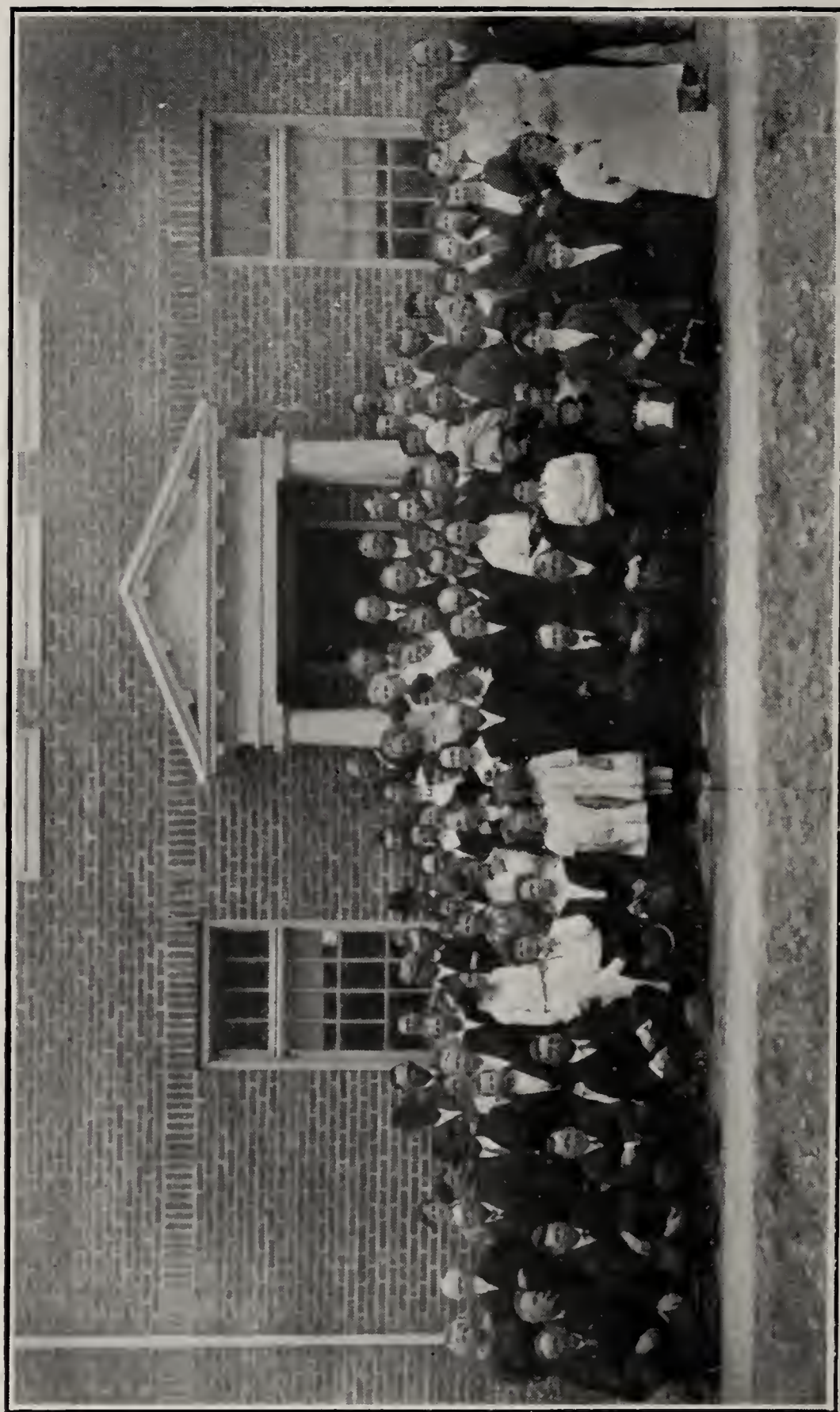
BAXTER RANCH HOME

At the present writing, my wife and I are very comfortable and happy in our little ranch home. We have sufficient means for our needs, and a good comfortable automobile to take us for a ride, when we want to go anywhere. The telephone keeps us in touch with our neighbors, the postoffice is at our door and we appreciate a radio presented to us by our friends. In the evening we sit in our chairs and turn on the radio, and bring into our little home some of the most beautiful programs that the world can produce. We have our grandchildren with us quite often, and our friends call upon us occasionally, so, at this writing, we are just as happy as it is possible for a couple of our age to be, and we just let the world go by.

After my release from the position of stake president I was ordained a Patriarch by Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith. This, to me, is the greatest honor, I could desire, giving me the authority and power to bless the children and grandchildren of those with whom I have been so closely associated during my active life.



THOSE PRESENT AT THE DEDICATION OF THE RANDOLPH CHAPEL
July 25 and 26, 1914. (See page 157)



HOME COMING WOODRUFF STAKE OFFICERS
June 5 and 6, 1922. (See page 170)

